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FUTUREWISE SUMMIT REPORT

Voices of Youth



The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities



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Summary

ABOUT THE SUMMIT

By 2050, more than half of the world's population under the age of 24 will live and be educated in sub-Saharan Africa. Despite strong economic growth in many countries in the region, high youth unemployment remains one of the most urgent political and socio-economic challenges. FutureWise is committed to transforming university education to prepare African youth to thrive in today's economy, and that of the future. FutureWise believes that any efforts to advance a sustainable employment agenda must be in line with the expectations of young people as agenda-setters and essential participants in this transformation.

Within this context, the FutureWise Summit brought together youth organisations and young people from across sub-Saharan Africa to engage in a dynamic dialogue on the main challenges and opportunities impacting youth employment on the continent. The summit was organized by Concordia University, the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie and the Association of Commonwealth Universities with the support of University of Lagos. It was held online on October 20th, 2021 and its agenda included: (i) welcoming words from the organizers, (ii) the remarks of two keynote speakers, (iii) two blocks of four simultaneous break-out sessions; and (iv) concluding remarks. The break-out sessions were facilitated in English and French as a means of fostering inter-regional exchanges on the following subjects related to higher education and youth unemployment:

Block 1

Breakout Session 1: Youth employment challenges and opportunities in a changing world

Breakout Session 2: Education and training as a pathway to improve youth employment prospects

Breakout Session 3: Empowering youth through entrepreneurship

Breakout Session 4: The role of digital technology in tackling the unemployment challenge.

Block 2

Breakout Session 5: Identifying key sectors for youth employment

Breakout Session 6: Reducing the employment gender gap.

Breakout Session 7: Aligning university-industry in support of youth employment.

Breakout Session 8: The role of FutureWise in preparing African youth to thrive in today's economy

The summit was a unique opportunity for participants to share views and learn from different organizations in the region, as well as to inform the FutureWise initiative by sharing their concerns and ideas on how it can best contribute to preparing youth for the work of tomorrow.

This report provides a summary of the discussions and the key highlights of the summit. It includes three appendices with information on the participants' background and the results of a follow-up questionnaire that was submitted by some of the participants. It is intended for multiple audiences and each section can be read independently, depending on the reader's level of interest on the different topics.

Summary

BREAKOUT SESSION HIGHLIGHTS AND MAIN TAKEAWAYS

The group of participants that attended the FutureWise summit was quite diverse in terms of countries and backgrounds (see Appendix 2). Most participants enjoyed the discussions and described the summit as an enriching experience. Although it was challenging for the moderators, some participants liked the combination of English and French speakers in the discussion sessions as it allowed them to find commonalities. The lack of time to engage in deeper discussions was an issue in most sessions. Participants were not explicitly asked to provide recommendations for the FutureWise initiative, but the following themes emerged as common threads through the conversations. They are the Voice of the African Youth and should be considered as important recommendations for FutureWise to help reduce youth unemployment in sub-Saharan Africa:

1. Support digitalization as a tool for communication and economic development

- Use the digital space to upskill students and connect actors and experts all around the world to support the transition (session #2).
- Develop internet usage as a communication and business development tool for all levels of the value chain (government, civil society, private sector, higher education institution) and all industries (session #3).
- Prepare young Africans with digital skills to better position them to find a job. Support young people to pair traditional skills with digital skills (programming, coding, digital marketing, etc.) for employment or entrepreneurship. (session #4).
- Democratize the access to information online and encourage them to learn it (session #4).
- Encourage students to build their professional network online (session #4).
- Continue to fund Africa universities to build digitized resources and courses (session #4).
- Encourage young people to take advantage of the digital world and gain new skills through e-learning, especially digital marketing, web and mobile development and skills connected to emerging sectors like AI and robotics (session #5).

2. Help build adaptive capacity building:

- Teach university students to be more adaptable so they can move with the demands of the market (session #1)
- Support African universities in adapting to digital learning (session #2).
- Encourage young people to continuously gain new skills through collaboration (session #4).
- Lead universities to develop entrepreneurship programs for women (session #6).
- Establish hubs to allow students to get a different range of skills preparing them for the job market (i.e. basic coding, simple digital projects, soft skills. etc) (session #7).
- Help African youth believe in themselves and make them globally competitive (mindset shift). Help them remain agile and open-minded to opportunities (session #8).
- Raise efforts to look into what's upcoming: what is the next industrial revolution? (session #8).

3. Foster dialogue and intersectoral collaboration:

- Create opportunities for dialogue between the economic and the academic world. For example, create programs that bridge between schools and the job market/ entrepreneurship (session #2).

- Create specific programs supported by universities and governments and enable women to enter STEM fields, grow their network and have access to funding (session #6).
- Encourage businesses to display their needs towards HEI, it would help universities to adapt their training and programs.
- Learn from and work with African partners on local and scalable solutions that address global issues (session #8).
- Create platforms for industry, universities and community to meet and communicate (session #8).

4. Contribute to the enabling conditions for youth entrepreneurship and employment

- Consider the family as a factor for youth integration into the workplace (session #1).
- Build structures that support youth into entrepreneurship through programs, contests and opportunities (session #2).
- Help create enabling conditions for young Africans to come up with solutions for local issues (ex. Malaria drugs, covid-19 vaccine, etc.). Solutions made by Africans, for Africans (session #2).
- Help boost business development locally (access to finance, tools, networks...), and boost markets for every sector (session #3)
- Simplify the creation process for young companies - at the government level (session #3).
- Build institutional and corporate cultures with supportive, inclusive environments for women to stay at work and advance into leadership positions (session #6).
- Give the incentives for businesses to employ students at different stages of their university degree - "it is important that these hubs start from day 1" of the students' journey (session #7).

5. Identify and promote scalable solutions in novel sectors

- Catalyze on the exchanges between actors to identify successful and scalable experiences and non-conventional solutions. Provide or help find support mechanisms and resources to replicate such experiences (session #2).
- Consider the problem of access to energy as a challenge and an opportunity for young people with technical skills to solve (session #5).
- Encourage young people to create businesses or find jobs in non-traditional sectors (session #5).

6. Promote experiential learning

- Let the private sector support skills training through experiential learning (on their own or in partnership with universities). For instance, get businesses involved to support youth in getting experience through internships in real work environments, which governments could incentivize (session #2).
- Support continuing education initiatives by providing opportunities to expose the students to the work market before graduation (session #7).

7. Help implement effective mentorship models

- Identify and encourage mentors to inspire and lead youth by example (session #1).
- Mentor women and showcase entrepreneurship success stories (session #6).

8. Promote youth participation in key decision-making processes

- Give youth a seat at the table, so they can have a say on the decisions that are usually made on their behalf (session #1).

Breakout Session 1

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN A CHANGING WORLD

Background

Africa has the world's second largest population, and according to the World Bank (2017), "its working age population is expected to grow by 450 million people, or close to 70 percent, by 2035." This means that over the next 15 years, the continent needs a strong strategy to create jobs at a steady pace. The challenges and opportunities for youth employment in sub-Saharan Africa have been discussed by different stakeholders over the years. However, new forces such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of new digital technologies (including smart phones), the surge of artificial intelligence, robotics, automation, etc., have added a new level of complexity for youth transitioning into economic life. This breakout session focused on listening to participants' perceptions of employment challenges and opportunities in their countries or regions.

Highlights

During the breakout room, the main challenges identified by the participants were:

- A mismatch between what the market and the competencies universities are teaching,
- That African youth are not considered in the decision-making process
- The disparity between the middle class and lower classes that lead to competitive disadvantage when it comes to employment
- The uneven access to education due to different cultural beliefs.

Opportunities

- Teach university students to be more adaptable so they can move with the demands of the market
- Give youth a seat at the table, so they can have a say on the decisions that are usually made on their behalf
- Consider the family as a factor for youth integration into the workplace
- Identify and encourage mentors to inspire and lead youth by example

Voices of participants

« Comment promouvoir le capital humain ? : la cellule familiale est la première responsable de l'éducation reçue, la ponctualité, l'engagement, la volonté »

« Une grande difficulté est identifiée dans les programmes : les programmes sont désuets. »

« In Mauritius, what we notice is that there is a big mismatch. Universities are producing engineers, doctors and lawyers. What we are missing out is the fact that the market is not waiting for an ideal. The market is waiting for something else. We are not prepared for school. We are not prepared for emotional intelligence, transversality, agility, flexibility, adaptability.»

"I've noticed [. . .] a disparity in addressing this issue in South African government, excluding the lower classes. It has been observed that it excludes the lower classes because of network issues and financial possibilities."

"Skills mismatch, statistics are quite worrying, 75% of African population is 19y.o. and below (Kenya statistics). We cannot have a discussion if we don't talk about the fact that youth is not at the decision table. If we cannot have the youth involved at the decision table"

« Les formations ne sont pas adaptées. Alors qu'aujourd'hui avec la digitalisation et avec le numérique tout a changé. On continue à donner des formations de façon classique, alors que les attentes du marché sont totalement différentes. On nous prépare à avoir de très bonnes notes mais on ne nous prépare pas à travailler en équipe, à avoir de la créativité »

« We don't necessarily have a seat at the decision table. Cultural change has to be taken in account to answer this point.»

Discussion 1 : Youth employment challenges and opportunities in a changing world
L'insertion professionnelle des jeunes - Défis et opportunités

**WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU/
PEOPLE FACE ?**

Mismatch between market is waiting for and what kind of competencies universities are producing

Universities are producing new professionals but the market is waiting for is necessary on the market

Big mismatch between universities and market

Compétences ne sont pas adaptées, les écoles en Afrique ne se sont pas adaptées

Huge disparity

Scolarisation des jeunes

Inequality of education

Exclusion of a part of the middle class / Lower class

Relation avec la famille

75% of the african population are 19y.o. and below

There are not at the decision table

Exclusion of a part of the middle class / Lower class

Valoriser les acquis académiques

Opportunities are different for each category

Cultural aspect is very important

Qualité des enseignements qui sont désuets

**WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DO YOU
SEE IN THE COMING YEARS?**

Majority of youth have certificates in areas employment don't find relevant and most of the employers are not ready to invest in retraining

Agility and flexibility which is missing in subjects taught at the university

Démonstration d'épanouissement

Promouvoir le capital humain !

Mentors qui peuvent servir d'exemple

Inspiration des expériences

Composantes de la culture travail

Famille : Premier réseau pour l'insertion

A lot of creative are pushing the walls of the employment market

How can youth employment be improved in your community/ country? What specific strategies will support this?

African youth is vibrant

The youth need to have a sit at the table where the decisions are made for them.

Résorber l'épineux problème de l'éducation

Breakout Session 2

EDUCATION AND TRAINING AS A PATHWAY TO IMPROVE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS

Background

Education and training play a major role as part of any youth employment strategy. However, it is unclear how much this currently contributes to preparing African youth for work. Although some argue that higher education makes a difference, others contend that colleges and universities are failing to support students acquire the skills necessary to gain employment in today's workforce or to successfully launch a business. Some critics suggest that the world is changing, and the education system needs to evolve with it. The purpose of this session was to learn about the participants' perceptions of the current higher education system and its contribution to youth employment.

Highlights

Africa has a lot of resources and the population is very young. However, employability is a major issue. Participants pointed out that African youth faces the following main challenges today when they want to transition from higher education to the job market or to entrepreneurship:

- There is a gap between education background, skills and the job market.
- Universities have trouble adapting to the rapid evolution of the job market – they do not seem to be compatible with each other.
- Training lacks strategic foresight to anticipate future changes.
- Limited access to quality training.
- There is a lack of awareness around entrepreneurship: more students should be encouraged to engage in entrepreneurship instead of waiting to get a job offer.
- African states have not defined their own values and development goals (that fit their context) apart from the neoliberal political-economic order proclaimed by the West. By the same token, some universities have not departed from the colonial education system that focuses civil service training that encourages the plunder of Africa and its resources. The best education systems are the ones that allow free thinking.

Opportunities

- Use the digital space to upskill students and connect actors and experts all around the world to support the transition.

- Let the private sector support skills training through experiential learning (on their own or in partnership with universities).
- Build structures that support youth into entrepreneurship through programs, contests and opportunities.
- Create programs that bridge between schools and the job market/entrepreneurship.

Voices of participants

“Je donne comme exemple mon pays la Mauritanie: le taux de chômage est tellement élevé, mais il y a énormément d'opportunités de travail. Pourquoi? Simplement parce que ces jeunes-là n'ont pas en tête les compétences et ne sont pas demandés sur le marché. C'est le défi que nous avons.”

“Experience in a setup (like in a business), working with mentors that have actually walked the path could be one of the best ways to encourage youth to start a business or work.”

“This is not a situation university can solve. A lot of it had to do with exposing students at early age to a workplace environment. Even for entrepreneurs, execution is the key, getting work experience in a real-world setting.”

“One key challenge I see is with the structure of education in Africa. It seems quite clear that many African states have hardly departed from the colonial education system, which primarily focuses on training civil service expertise to facilitate and promote colonial plunder of Africa.”

“C'est au niveau des institutions et au niveau gouvernemental qui doivent essayer

d'harmoniser les systèmes éducatifs de l'élémentaire jusqu'au supérieur pour permettre à des jeunes de répondre aux besoins du marché [...] malheureusement ce n'est pas le cas."

"Dans la cadre des opportunités, ce sont les programmes mis en place pour favoriser

l'insertion professionnelle et les entreprises susceptibles d'intégrer les jeunes à la recherche d'emploi. Il faut d'une manière générale ranger tous les organismes institués voués à l'insertion professionnelle des jeunes ou à la création d'entreprises, et qui servent souvent de tremplins pour affronter le monde du travail."

Discussion 2 : Education and training as a pathway to improve youth's employment prospects Une meilleure adéquation entre formations et débouchés professionnels

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU SEE?

The structure of education in Africa. It seems quite clear that many African states have hardly departed from the colonial education system, which system primarily focuses on training civil service expertise to facilitate and promote colonial plunder of Africa

Secondly, employment or jobs in the way it is imagined and trained for also accounts for the difficulties we have. Africa seems too deeply immersed into the neoliberal political economic order established and championed by western thought and interests.

Not a situation where universities can solve. A lot of it had to do with exposing students at early age to a workplace environment. Even for entrepreneurs, execution is the key, getting work experience in a real world setting.

Les Universités n'arrivent pas à s'adapter aux changements, ce qui emmène à conserver des filières qui ne sont plus porteuses d'emplois

Lacunes en termes de compétences transversales et la faiblesse de la culture entrepreneuriale (dans le sens être acteur de son propre destin/futur

L'évolution rapide du monde du travail et le manque d'anticipation/préparation sur les formations dans les métiers de demain

Un dialogue à renforcer entre le monde économique et le monde économique

La non-compatibilité entre la formation et le marché du travail

Un écart quantitatif et qualitatif en termes de compétences disponibles sur le marché de l'emploi.

L'accès à des formations de Qualité ! C'est le défi majeur pour l'insertion des jeunes

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES/ IDEAS DO YOU SEE?

Ce sont les programmes mis en place pour favoriser insertion professionnelle et les entreprises susceptibles d'intégrer les jeunes à la recherche de emploi. On parlerait donc de passerelle et sous ce vocable il faut d'une manière générale ranger tous les organismes institués voués à l'insertion professionnelle des jeunes ou à la création d'entreprises, et qui servent souvent de tremplins pour affronter le monde du travail.

Structures d'accompagnement à l'entrepreneuriat portent des initiatives qui permettent de toucher plus de jeunes qui au travers des différents concours auxquels ils participent renforcent leurs compétences transversales.

Opportunité d'utiliser le digital pour augmenter les compétences des jeunes

Outils digitaux facilitent la mise en réseau des différents acteurs et experts du monde entier

Le secteur privé met en place, de plus en plus, des dispositifs d'apprentissage par la pratique

Il faut de nouveaux secteurs tel qu'une économie sociale et solidaire qui peut être une vraie opportunité pour les jeunes

HOW CAN WE HELP ? FUTUREWISE) ACTIONS

To help, Futurewise can get businesses involved in the conversation of supporting youth get work experience, let them see how businesses are run and what the environment looks like. Help Government to mandate and incentivize offering of internship.

Appuyer les initiatives qui ont porté leurs fruits afin de les faire changer d'échelle, notamment dans la mise en dialogue du monde économique avec le monde académique

Appuyer les Universités Africaines dans la conception de contenus digitaux pour l'enseignement à distance

Appuyer la mise en place de formations professionnalisantes (formation en alternance, ou en apprentissage,...)

Appuyer les Initiatives de formations continues (post graduate) pour pouvoir augmenter les compétences des jeunes ce qui va donner plus de chance d'insertion

Catalyser les échanges entre les acteurs concernés et donner à voir/participer au partage des expériences réussies et pouvant être dupliquées facilement

EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Background

According to the African Development Bank, “22% of Africa’s working-age population are starting new businesses, the highest rate in the world. Businesses with fewer than 20 employees and less than 5 years’ experience provide the most jobs in Africa’s formal sector.” This indicates that entrepreneurship may play an important role in job creation, particularly for young people in Africa.

For the purpose of this session, “youth empowerment” refers to offering an enabling environment for young people to develop their potential allowing them to contribute to the development of the society. This breakout session focused on how young entrepreneurs can best be empowered to thrive in today’s business environment.

Highlights

The participants discussed the different obstacles to the young entrepreneur’s success. Three main issues were raised, the first one is the economic and social environment that limits youth employment, which tends to push them toward precarious job situations. The second barrier is the one of government policies and regulations as they hinder the entrepreneurial spirit and the creation of new ventures. Lastly, the participants mentioned how university graduates lack practical competencies and corporate training when entering the employment market. Therefore, foreign workforce is most often preferred over local graduates.

Opportunities

Public institutions and universities could:

- Help boost business development locally (access to finance, tools, networks...), and boost markets for every sector.
- Develop internet usage as a communication and business development tool for all levels of the value chain (government, civil society, private sector, higher education institution) and all industries.
- Simplify the creation process for young companies (at the government level).

Voices of participants

“Une autre préoccupation est le manque de compétences. Nous préférons nous délocaliser pour aller chercher la compétence à l’international car les besoins des prestations des entreprises sont spécialisées et nécessitent des personnes compétentes dans le domaine, plutôt que des étudiants sortant de l’université sans expérience concrète en entreprise”

“La valorisation du développement numérique. On pourrait se référer aux spécialistes dans différents domaines, par exemple au commerçants, pour mieux créer et adapter des plateformes ou sites vitrines. Cela les aidera à s’insérer et créer leur marché, à créer une chaîne de valeur, ainsi que de donner sens au développement numérique”

“Plutôt que de financer une entreprise, il pourrait y avoir plus d’appels d’offres de besoin. (. . .) Cela permettrait un premier départ avec des clients spécifiques, une opportunité d’employer de la main d’œuvre pour l’appel d’offre, et plus d’assurance pour le futur de la startup”

“Bien qu’il y ait une facilité pour la création, il y a un coût qui demeure et pour lesquels les entrepreneurs n’ont pas toujours les moyens”

“On pourrait proposer de faciliter les relations entre grandes entreprises et startups pour l’attribution d’un premier marché”

Discussion 3 : Empowering youth through entrepreneurship Renforcer l'autonomisation des jeunes à travers l'entrepreneuriat

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE ? (obstacles, pains, etc)

L'environnement économique et social est aussi un frein au développement de l'entrepreneuriat

Réformes nationales poussent à limiter l'emploi de la jeunesse

Difficulté d'obtenir des contrats de longue durée, les jeunes trouvent plutôt des emplois précaires

Entrepreneurs protègent leurs entreprise en n'employant pas autant qu'ils pourraient

Pesanteurs politiques qui mettent des obstacles au développement des entreprises

Création d'entreprises freinées par les coûts pour lesquels les entrepreneurs n'ont pas toujours les moyens

Manque de compétences disponibles du côté des jeunes, et pas toujours en adéquation avec besoins des entreprises

Manque d'expérience: personnes sont formées en théorie mais ne sont pas entrainés en pratique / dans l'entreprise

Certifications étrangères sont gage de compétence, de qualité, plus que celles délivrées localement

Préférence vers la délocalisation des compétences
-> se tournent vers les compétences étrangères

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DO YOU SEE? (success factors, facteurs de succès)

Besoin de réformes des administrations qui contrôlent les systèmes pour les entreprises

Trop d'intervenants et de couches décisionnelles entre les différents acteurs de la chaîne de valeur

Besoins: Développement d'affaires locales, cadre fiscal, etc

Importance de développer les marchés dans chaque domaine

Développer l'usage d'internet comme élément de pérennisation dans le travail

Exemple: utilisation des noms de domaines cohérents pour tous les commerçants horeca etc -> pour créer des sites vitrines

Exemple: développement de Dubai

Marché numérique global, permet la mise en avant des administrations et des entreprises

WHAT COULD BE DONE ? (ideas about who can help, role of universities, institutions, etc)

Plus de soutien au développement numérique des différents acteurs locaux (admin, entreprises etc)

Rôle des Universités en développement de compétences utiles aux entreprises

Faciliter les relations entre grandes entreprises et startups pour l'attribution d'un premier marché aussi

Plus de chances pour participer aux appels d'offre

Créer plus d'occasions de partage d'informations entre les administrations, les opérateurs économiques, les partenaires internationaux

Breakout Session 4

THE ROLE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IN TACKLING THE UNEMPLOYMENT CHALLENGE

Background

Some of the largest tech companies have embarked on a mission to support the digitalizing of Africa. For example, Google launched an initiative in 2017 to train 10 million young people in online skills, and it recently announced an investment of \$US 1 billion over the next five years to support Africa's digital transformation (Google, 2021). Such an investment focuses on enabling fast, affordable internet access for more Africans; building helpful products; supporting entrepreneurship and small business; and helping not-for-profit organizations to improve lives across Africa (Ventures Africa, 2021). This breakout session was about listening to participants' perspectives on the potential of digital technologies and skills for improving young people's employment prospects and livelihoods in general.

Highlights of discussions

In this discussion, participants talked about how digital literacy contributes to the advancement of young people's careers. Traditional skills are not sufficient today. The digital world is a great opportunity for the young generation to access employment with skills that give them a competitive advantage. The digital world can allow them to develop those skills and access more information online. Finally, the digital world can lead to opportunities outside of their physical location, so they can stay competitive and collaborate at an international level.

Opportunities

- Prepare young Africans with digital skills to better position them to find a job.
- Encourage young people to continuously gain new skills through collaboration.
- Democratize the access to information online and encourage them to learn it.
- Support young people to pair traditional skills with digital skills (programming, coding, digital marketing, etc.) if appropriate for employment or entrepreneurship.
- Encourage students to build their professional network online.
- Continue to fund Africa universities to build digitized resources and courses.

Voices of participants

"Aujourd'hui dans les grandes villes on a besoin de gens qui maîtrisent les outils numériques."

"Le numérique a beaucoup à nous offrir pour l'employabilité des jeunes"

"C'est un grand plus pour notre génération"

"Il faut qu'on soit curieux et qu'on ait soif d'apprendre"

"Digital literacy comes from collaboration"

"Pour l'entrepreneuriat le numérique est essentiel"

"Digital technologies give young people a competitive edge to learn new skills"

"Digital technologies give young people the opportunity to work without any geographical boundaries, they can get a job anywhere by working remotely"

Discussion 4 : The role of digital technology in tackling the unemployment challenge

Le rôle du numérique dans le défi de l'employabilité des jeunes

COMMENT LA CULTURE NUMERIQUE CONTRIBUE A AMELIORER L'EMPLOYABILITE DES JEUNES SELON VOTRE EXPERIENCE ?

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES DIGITAL LITERACY CONTRIBUTE TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S CARRER (REFLECT ON YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE)

Le digital aide les jeunes dans les villes : savoir lire les mails / les instructions / se connecter aux plateformes de travail

Le numérique a bcp d'importance dans l'entrepreneuriat avec les réseaux sociaux

Avoir une bonne culture c'est aussi avoir une bonne faculté d'apprentissage car on a accès à des informations ou des savoirs en ligne

Ability information on internet gives a competitive edge for young university do not teach digital skills

COMMENT LE NUMERIQUE PEUT CONTRIBUER A AMELIORER L'EMPLOI DES JEUNES ?

HOW CAN DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES HELP IMPROVE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT ?

L'information est accessible grâce au numérique les plateformes elearning sont nombreuses ; il faut être curieux, et avoir la curiosité, c'est un grand plus pour notre génération pour améliorer ses compétences en négociation par exemple il suffit de taper dans google pour la recherche d'emploi il ya bcp de plateformes pour trouver des jobs et des entreprises ou des associés

avec Covid 19 tout le monde travaille virtuellement / permet de travailler ensemble / travailler en remote c'est devenu la nouvelle norme / on peut travailler partout dans le monde / ça augmente les chances

COMMENT LE NUMERIQUE PEUT RENFORCER L'ESPRIT ENTREPRENEURIAL DES JEUNES ?

HOW CAN DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES STRENGTHEN YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP ?

en tant qu'économiste l'accès au marché et l'accès à l'information est clé les plus grandes barrières à la production sont l'accès à la bonne information on a besoin d'avoir accès à la bonne information pour accéder à la production : ou sont les ressources on the supply side : ou est le marché / se faire connaître du marché

Quand on étudie l'histoire on fait des algorithmes / il faut être programmeur / coder / si on veut travailler comme consultant il faut maîtriser le digital j'ai dû apprendre de nouvelles compétences pour travailler de façon plus collaborative / il faut apprendre continuellement

QUEL RÔLE JOUENT LES UNIVERSITÉS DANS LE DÉVELOPPEMENT NUMÉRIQUE EN AFRIQUE ?

WHAT ROLE DO UNIVERSITIES PLAY IN AFRICA'S DIGITALIZATION ?

en tant qu'étudiant il est important de faire du networking d'être présent sur linkedin les universités ont des fonds pour digitaliser et pour faire monter les compétences des étudiants

work done manually can be done digitally faire du design à distance / via email / avoir plus de clients en dehors de son propre marché

Breakout Session 5

IDENTIFYING KEY SECTORS FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Background

There is an argument that there are untapped sectors that could significantly contribute to youth employment and entrepreneurship in sub-Saharan Africa. For example, some experts have referred to the maritime or creative/cultural industries as the potential sectors that could be leveraged to create a significant number of opportunities for young people. This breakout session focused on participants' perspectives on untapped and/or non-traditional sectors and their potential for job creation and entrepreneurship for young people in Africa.

Highlights of discussions

In this discussion, participants addressed the emerging opportunities for job creation and entrepreneurship in different sectors or industries. They highlighted these sectors in particular:

- Sectors connected to innovative technologies like AI and robotics.
- Energy and electricity sector to build a more robust infrastructure
- Fintech to support the increased need for e-commerce
- Education technology (EdTech) to boost e-learning
- Digital health or Health Tech
- Green economy to innovate trash collection and recycling
- Agriculture
- Video game industry
- Social and solidarity economy

Opportunities

- Encourage young people to take advantage of the digital world and gain new skills through e-learning, especially digital marketing, web and mobile development and skills connected to emerging sectors like AI and robotics.
- Consider the problem of access to energy as a challenge and an opportunity for young people with technical skills to solve.
- Encourage young people to create businesses or find jobs in some of the non-traditional sectors mentioned above.

Voices of participants

"Il faut que les jeunes s'impliquent dans l'économie sociale et solidaire. C'est un secteur qui peut régler les problèmes des jeunes en faisant appel à la solidarité entre les jeunes."

"Avec le numérique un jeune peut facilement mettre en place des plateformes de vente en ligne. C'est un secteur qui n'a pas besoin d'un gros capital."

"Le secteur du digital peut vraiment faire le feu en Afrique, à cause du faible taux de pénétration du digital en Afrique. Nous les jeunes nous pourrions faire augmenter le taux de pénétration du digital en Afrique"

"Je suis dans le secteur de la formation, et là où on a le plus de demande c'est dans le secteur du digital. Dans le digital il y a un manque de compétences, il y a plus d'offre que de demande"

"Les secteurs de la robotique et de l'IA commencent à émerger et c'est le moment pour les jeunes d'acquérir des compétences dans ces domaines."

"L'accès à l'énergie est un gros challenge en Afrique, mais c'est aussi une opportunité pour l'employabilité des jeunes. Les besoins sont énormes".

"There is a need to explore the green economy, innovation in the green economy. There are many opportunities than can be explored. The problem of climate change is growing year on year and we need more entrepreneurs to solve those problems because entrepreneurs are problem solvers".

“L’avenir c’est la formation en ligne”.

“On a besoin de solutions adaptées dans le domaine de la santé digitale”.

“Les jeunes peuvent réussir et apporter des solutions réelles”.

Discussion 5 : Identifying key sectors for youth employment Identifier les secteurs d’activité porteurs pour les jeunes

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU/ PEOPLE FACE ?

Economie sociale et solidaire secteur vraiment intéressant pour régler les problèmes des jeunes avec la solidarité

Secteur digital numérique agriculture les jeunes peuvent monter des plateformes e-commerce et vendre en ligne par exemple même sur whatsapp pas besoin de beaucoup de capital on peut commencer petit agriculture: une fois capital donné tu entretiens et tu récoltes quelque chose à la fin

Digital à cause du faible taux de pénétration en Afrique les jeunes pourront faire augmenter le taux de pénétration c'est à nous de nous intéresser au digital nous pourrions

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DO YOU SEE IN THE COMING YEARS?

Au Mali un jeune a créé une entreprise de robotique au Mali - il a étudié aux USA il essaye de faire entrer la robotique au Mali il fait des matériaux pour les usines grâce à la robotique il fait des mains bioniques (capteurs pour faire bouger la main)

entrepreneuriat en ligne en 2014 pas fréquent à l'époque au début je n'avais pas de client je faisais des personnes en présentiel ils préféraient présentiel au distanciel j'ai commencé les clients en distanciel après la crise. Les gens ont commencé à comprendre. meilleur Ça pendant la crise.

Jeux vidéos à Madagascar dans une communauté africaine de gamers ils organisent des événements et développent des jeux vidéos également la robotique

QUELS SONT LES SECTEURS QUI GÉNÉRERONT LE PLUS D'EMPLOI POUR LES JEUNES DANS LES 5 À 10 PROCHAINES ANNÉES ? POURQUOI ?

WHICH SECTORS WILL CREATE JOBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN AFRICA IN THE NEXT 5 TO 10 YEARS ? WHY ?

Dans la formation insertion professionnelle on a le plus de demande dans le marketing digital dev web et dev mobile il y a plus de demande que de personnes disposant de robotique et IA ça commence à émerger pas assez de formation là-dedans

Digital robotique énergies renouvelables et agriculture

Benin une plateforme pour prendre des RV médicaux et avoir un carnet médical en ligne ça aide vraiment les médecins

L'accès à l'énergie est importante - attention ! c'est un gros challenge et une opportunité pour employabilité des jeunes on aide les jeunes ingénieurs en électricité mécanique à mettre en place des projets pour solutionner ces déficits énergétiques Dans le milieu rural mais aussi dans les entreprises

en RDC Schoolapp école en ligne développée par un jeune ex employé des télécoms pour développer l'accès à l'éducation plus de 1000 écoles inscrites sur sa plateforme il a pu lever des fonds au niveau international il a pu traverser les frontières et exporter le concept à d'autres pays comme l'Angola

Entreprise au Mali pour transformer le plastique/les ordures ménagères en bois/charbon (pour cuisiner) au Mali les ordures sont mal gérées et ils prennent les déchets pour les transformer / mais on lui a demandé de payer il a abandonné...

innovation in green economy : app to identify trash for recycling il faut plus d'entrepreneurs

expérience de création Carnet médical numérique mais difficulté des infrastructures des hôpitaux former les médecins à l'utilisation

Fintech pour les sites e-commerce par exemple Ed tech - formation en ligne avec la crise sanitaire beaucoup de gens ont compris l'importance d'avoir des modules en ligne université ou écoles privées coach en ligne

Breakout Session 6

REDUCING THE EMPLOYMENT GENDER GAP

Background

The employment of young women is vital for social development and economic growth. This explains why gender equality and the empowerment of women is one of the main goals of the global SDGs. However, gender disparity in terms of opportunities and participation in economic activities is an important issue for African countries. For example, many working women still remain self-employed and over 60 per cent of all working women remain in agriculture, often concentrated in time and labour-intensive activities, which are often unpaid or poorly remunerated (ILO, 2016). This breakout session encouraged participants to share their perspectives on gender disparity with respect to youth employment and entrepreneurship, as well as on possible solutions to reduce the gender gap in employment.

Highlights of discussions

The participants identified four main challenges associated with the issues of gender disparity and youth employment or entrepreneurship:

- Men are still perceived as the leaders in the workplace and in business. Thus, women have less access to careers in the domains of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).
- Women lack mentorship opportunities and representation. It is challenging to show them the value they could generate as working or businesswomen, especially for non-traditional roles.
- Women have a biological disadvantage as child bearers and primary caregivers, making it hard for them to not only enter, but to also stay in the market.
- Women don't have the same support as men from both the government and their families to build businesses.

Opportunities

- Mentor women and showcase entrepreneurship success stories.
- Build institutional and corporate cultures with supportive, inclusive environments for women to stay at work and advance into leadership positions.
- Create specific programs supported by universities and governments and enable

women to enter STEM fields, grow their network and have access to funding.

- Lead universities to develop entrepreneurship programs for women.

Voices of participants

"Though some recruiters think women are better job candidates, some business leaders consider women better suited for business success in terms of interpersonal skills and communication. Regardless of these examples, most people still believe men are better suited to succeed in today's business world or environment."

"Countries should focus on the institutional structures and corporate culture that either encourage the creation of a supportive, inclusive environment where women are retained and can advance to leadership positions."

"Nous devons commencer par des sensibilisations. Les pouvoirs publics doivent changer les systèmes d'éducation. On part à l'université pour entrer dans une entreprise. Nous ne sommes pas formés pour créer une entreprise. Ça doit commencer par des réformes au niveau du système universitaire. Et les pousser à la persévérance. Le fil n'est pas droit. »

"En Afrique, nos systèmes sont habitués à la bureaucratie et ce que nous apprenons à l'école ne favorise pas pour entreprendre. Ceux qui s'en sortent le mieux sont ceux qui ont des

parents qui peuvent les soutenir. Il faut qu'il y ait une volonté gouvernementale pour que les femmes puissent être encouragées dans l'entrepreneuriat »

« On devrait pouvoir accompagner les femmes par des programmes de mentorat, y compris pour montrer l'exemple ! »

« Voir des femmes et leurs réalisations donne envie à d'autres ! ».

« Gender problem interact with racial problem and entering the market is not the only issue: the problem is to be and stay in the market”.

Discussion 6 : Bridging the gender unemployment gap L'employabilité des jeunes face aux inégalités de genre

WHAT CHALLENGES EXIST?

To what extent is more difficult (or not) for women to succeed in their professional careers or in business than for men? Why?

Culture Les jeunes filles sont moins scolarisées	Women participation access to entrepreneur related to science and technologies
Less chance for women	Women has lack to hear about science and technology subjects
Lack of mentorship, social relation	Show to women that they have something to share with the society
Culture is omnipresent	Women have to justify the fact that you are doing the same job
Men are the ones who would lead the business or would be the key elements	Needs of the family is used against them
Duty jobs : struggling putting hours after hours.	Not only enter the market but also stay in the market
Nous ne sommes pas formés pour créer une entreprise	Lack of support of the governments for informal entrepreneurial aspect

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES/ IDEAS DO YOU SEE?

Countries should focus on the institutional structures and corporate culture that either encourage the creation of a supportive, inclusive environment where women are retained and can advance to leadership positions.

Réforme de l'éducation pour intégrer la persévérance car monde de l'entrepreneuriat n'est pas rose

Mentors : Examples of women who has been able to invest the entrepreneurial aspect

Mentorship to enable women to enter technology and science subjects

Networking is a key elements

Il faut donc trouver des organismes qui vont encourager les femmes

What is entrepreneurial and what is not

Programmes de mentorats et de financements

Sensibilisation auprès des universités

WHAT CAN BE DONE ?

What role do universities and/or governments have in encouraging women to become entrepreneurs?

Les états ne sont pas à la disposition de l'entrepreneuriat pour la jeunesse	Organisations doivent aider à pousser et persévérer	Sensibilisation auprès des universités	Instaurer des systèmes d'éducation différents
Fundings to help women in entrepreneurship	Nos systèmes sont habitués à la bureaucratie	Volonté politique est nécessaire	Réseautage des affaires

Breakout Session 7

ALIGNING UNIVERSITY-INDUSTRY IN SUPPORT OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Background

The nexus between university and the private sector has an important role to play in youth employment in Africa. Universities have traditionally prepared students for jobs in the public sector, neglecting the needs of the private sector (Sci Dev Net, 2021). An African Economic Outlook report suggests that “the degrees awarded [by universities] do not necessarily align with promising career paths such as telecommunications, engineering, agriculture, IT, health, banking and education” (Sci Dev Net, 2021). Further, the report asserts that “university students learn little about how to apply their research for engaging in entrepreneurship, solving problems in the community or commercializing innovations” (Sci Dev Net, 2021). This may explain the proliferation of innovation hubs across Africa as an alternative to the formal education system.

Although universities have begun to re-orient their curriculum to careers to cater to the needs of the private sector, many young graduates struggle to find jobs in their field of study. In some instances, this has forced young graduates into the informal work sector. This breakout session focused on participants’ perspectives on the relevance of higher education in response to the needs of the private sector (e.g., industry).

Highlights of discussions

Participants first discussed the potential misalignment between formal higher education and the private sector. A few points rose: first of all, employability of graduates is not a priority for HEIs (higher education institutions). Also, culturally, working experience before graduation is not specifically encouraged. Another issue is that there are inequalities in the way private versus public universities have access to funding, business connections, or in how the value they deliver is assessed. Lastly, there is a major lack of connections and communication between HEIs and the business world:

- Graduates’ skills and profiles are not relevant enough for the industries / companies.
- Graduates are lacking experience - theoretical education is favored over experiential learning.
- There are no real innovation happening in HEIs

Opportunities

Participants discussed how universities and the private sector could possibly improve the employment outcomes for young graduates in Africa with potential activities implemented by both together. The point was mainly a need

from the governments to enable connections between public universities and businesses.

This could allow for example to:

- encourage businesses to display their needs towards HEI, it would help universities to adapt their training and programs.
- provide opportunities to expose the students to the work market before graduation.
- help funding internship programs
- give the incentives for businesses to employ students at different stages of their university degree - “it is important that these hubs start from day 1” of the students’ journey.
- Participants also discussed the option of having hubs allowing students to get a different range of skills preparing them for the job market. This could include for example:
 - Trainings in different levels of STEM curriculums at very early stage of education (simple coding, simple digital projects)
 - Organization of competitions or hackathons stimulating the gain of diverse digital skills.
 - Access to tools: hardware, software, even simple resources.

Voices of participants

“Il y a une demande très forte du marché pour plus de compétences que les universités n’arrivent pas à fournir”. . Le système éducatif ne change pas assez vite pour suivre les demandes et besoins du marché du travail”

“The communications between university and the corporate world is not functioning as it should: now, students go on a work experience program at the end of their curriculum when they have nearly reached the end of their degree level. What I feel is that the work experience program should start from the very beginning of university.”

“Looking at the ratio, it is less than 10% of the universities in Nigeria. We would need the government to step in. The communications between the private sector and universities is not so great; and the private sector doesn’t feel the need to talk to public universities because they would need some government intervention or comply with government obligations.”

“Maybe a tax relief offer from the government could be a motivation for when companies hire a student from their first year”

“We need the creation of good working policies, specific contracts from the public and the private sector to ensure and give accountability for both sides of the government and the universities that can guarantee that at least X-amount of

graduates can find internships or other work opportunities.”

“Il faut qu’il y ait une plateforme entre secteur privé, les entreprises, et tout le système universitaire pour pouvoir créer cette concertation, et suivre la demande du marché”

“The innovation hubs can come from the universities, and they can actually be more active and helpful than what governments can give. The Innovation hubs may have the interest to grow while the government might have only interest and motivation for money. If it comes from the youth, from their passion, they will have natural motivation to keep it going”

“Students need to learn how to be professional using soft skills. They need to know how to tackle problems, be professional, creatively solve problems, make decisions, talk about our emotions, etc. in a world of work constantly evolving”

“Taking the example of Nigeria, the private sector tends to hire from private institutions that are already specialized in a field, for example business schools, even if it has the same course curriculum. Private universities have a much higher employability rate than the public universities.

“For example, when covid stroke, public universities were shut down by the government, while private universities kept their program going”

Discussion 7 : Aligning university-industry in support of youth employment Renforcer le lien Universités-Entreprises pour améliorer l'employabilité des jeunes

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE ? (obstacles, pains, etc)

Pas assez de lien entre jeunes diplômés et entreprises	
Manque de pratique: allier la théorie et la pratique (stages, experiential learning)	Forte demande de formations et de compétences qui ne sont pas fournies par l'enseignement supérieur
Pas assez de lien entre jeunes diplômés et entreprises	Pas d'innovation liée à la demande du marché de la part des systèmes scolaires et universités
Public / private HEI: pb with funding and profit value derived from projects	Private universities have more collaboration with businesses than public universities
Private universities have this connection with the business world, public ones not so much	Le système ne se met pas à jour assez vite vs les changements du marché
Covid -> shift from physical to digital learning	Public universities have so much on their plates that students employability is not a priority
Some countries: interns must pay for internships	Students before graduation not used / willing to work, no opportunities to earn money, gain skills and experience

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DO YOU SEE ? (collaboration, common activities, innovation hubs)

encourage businesses to display their needs towards HEI so that they adapt their trainings and programs	Create link with entreprise world early on in the curriculum (first year)
Exposer les étudiants au marchés, au-delà des enseignements théoriques	Incentives for businesses to employ students at different stages of curriculum
Incentivise gvts to motivate students to go and find a job to have a first corporate experience	Help fund internships for students
Innovation hub stem from universities (more active / valuable than government initiatives)	Beaucoup de ressources disponibles en Afrique
	Différence de vitesse / vélocité entre secteurs privé et public -> comment diminuer cette différence ?

WHAT COULD BE DONE ? (ideas about who can help, role of universities, institutions, etc)

Créer une plateforme entre secteur privé et systèmes universitaires pour créer concertation entre demande marché et cursus des universités	Specific contracts from public / private sectors to be publicized for the graduates	Encourage the teaching of soft skills, coping skills, for new entrepreneurs, along with technical skills
Work on motivation: passion / value, over money (as is the case for the gvts)	Different levels of STEM curriculums, at very early stage of education (simple coding, simple digital projects)	Développer les soft skills des étudiants, en plus des compétences techniques -> créer des managers, pas seulement des techniciens
Creation of policies to ensure accountability from both sides	Give access to tools: hardware, software, even simple resources	Help gain digital skills through digital competitions, hackatons,
	Innovation hubs: commencer bcp plus tôt dans le process	

Breakout Session 8

THE ROLE OF FUTUREWISE IN PREPARING AFRICAN YOUTH TO THRIVE IN TODAY'S ECONOMY

Background

FutureWise aims to deliver benefits for universities and students, as well as the broader ecosystem in which they operate. By engaging key actors in the design and implementation of solutions, FutureWise will support universities in sub-Saharan Africa to lead the way in navigating the challenges that African societies face in terms of youth employment. Within this context, FutureWise seeks to help students identify themselves as business and job creators and to prepare them to excel in today's labour market. This breakout session provided an idea on how participants understand the goals of FutureWise, as well as an opportunity for participants to make recommendations on how the initiative can make a meaningful impact on youth employment in sub-Saharan Africa.

Highlights of discussions

This is what participants understand FutureWise is trying to accomplish:

- Ensuring there is coordination between the real world and the academic world.
- Helping African young generations be prepared to face the challenges of our times and be globally competitive.
- Facilitating on-going conversations and listen to what key actors have to say and to their recommendations.
- Providing tools and resources (such as mentorship) to help youth pursue business opportunities.
- Co-creating positive change for Africa's future with civil society, government and businesses.
- Providing a platform for African youth to reshape their thinking and prepare their minds so that they can find solutions and create their own opportunities.

Opportunities

Participants believe that the main opportunities for ensuring FutureWise's successful support are to:

- Learn from and work with African partners on local and scalable solutions that address global issues.
- Help create enabling conditions for young Africans to come up with solutions for local

issues (ex. Malaria drugs, covid-19 vaccine, etc.). Solutions made by Africans, for Africans.

- Create platforms for industry, universities and community to meet and communicate.
- Help African youth believe in themselves and make them globally competitive (mindset shift).
- Grow youth community in Africa through the development of the infrastructure related to the internet.
- Support industry-academia curricular collaboration.
- Raise efforts to look into what's upcoming: what is the next industrial revolution?

The **pitfalls** FutureWise should be aware and avoid:

- Neglecting that there are significant local policies and mobility issues to overcome.
- Assuming that a given solution will work for ever. Proposed solutions will require continuous adaptation; universities need to become dynamic.
- Creating too many policies with little or no implementation.
- Assuming that global solutions will be the fix when they may not always be the way forward.
- The fear of investing in something that might become obsolete.

- Focusing too much on technological solutions. Opportunities will not exist in them, but in how they are used.
- Not being inclusive and failing to serve the less privileged. Be aware of who has access to opportunities and consider privilege-based risks of control (ex. family, power, wealth...)
- Not being open-minded to emerging opportunities. It is important to remain agile.

Voices of participants

"I think one of the key things FutureWise is trying to accomplish is to make African youth to be globally competitive. [...] The world will not wait for us. We missed out on the third industrial revolution."

"We should look more at scalable initiatives. What I believe has been the cause of the high employment deficit is the fact that our job creation attempts are not able to respond to the scale and magnitude of the job demand."

"I am looking at one particular industry that can create 1 million jobs and nothing comes to mind. Time has come for us to look at unconventional places. Places that previously we were not looking at to create jobs. Let's say social media."

"The plethora of challenges in Africa is an opportunity for creating solutions that can attract work. We shouldn't allow anybody to come to Africa to create solutions for us. For me, it is key for the plethora of crises in Africa pertaining to a lot of opportunities for Africans, for us to develop solutions, to solve our problems."

Discussion 8 : The role of FutureWise in preparing African youth to thrive in today's economy Le rôle de FutureWise dans l'insertion économique des jeunes en Afrique

WHAT IS FUTUREWISE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH? / QU'EST-CE QUE FUTUREWISE VEUT ACCOMPLIR?

Co-create the positive change for Africa's future with civil society, government and businesses

Ensure there is coordination between the real world and the academic world and that young generations are prepared to face the challenge of our times.

Avoir une bonne culture c'est aussi avoir une bonne faculté d'apprentissage car on a accès à des informations ou des savoirs en ligne

Work on the conditions for a better Africa and a better World.

How can we rethink our thinking to support Africa to see that we can pick up all the opportunity available and to create more on the continent. How can we provide a platform for youths to create their own opportunities. how can we prepare their minds to find solutions

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES COULD ENSURE ITS SUCCESS? / QUELLES SONT LES OPPORTUNITÉS QUI POURRAIENT ASSURER SON SUCCÈS ?

Learning from each other. local solutions to global sustainability challenges. There is an opportunity to work together.

Make african youth to be globally competitive. Focus attention on helping african youth to believe in themselves, to be competitive and peer-to-peer with any others in the world

As obvious as it may seem; keep an open mind to the opportunities. Solutions do not belong to any one geography or persons or groups. And as much as globalisation will not be reversed any time soon, global solutions may not always be the way forward.

Opportunities for african people to create their own solutions to local issues (ex. Malaria, covid-19 vaccine, etc.). By africans, for africans

Industry collaboration: academics with guys in industry to co-curriculums together

WHAT PITFALLS COULD FUTUREWISE BE AWARE OF AND AVOID? QUELS SONT LES PIÈGES QUE FUTUREWISE POURRAIT CONNAÎTRE ET ÉVITER?

Dilemma for university investments: they plan in decades, not in years. They are also commercial entities and students fees usually don't cover the costs. Trap: the fear of investing in something that might become obsolete; analysis paralysis, not taking a stand for anything. The trick: figure out at what point do we need to invest before we make the next great thing? Goal: Retain agile and not static

Caution: tech more than traditional manufacture faces the threat of monopoly: dominated by a handful of players only. Opportunity will not exist in the tech solutions themselves, but it how you can be used (ex. Antitrust cases in USA, Apple vs. Epic games).

Local policies, mobility issues

Naval gazing. Solutions may not be singular end-state. Solutions may be evolving over time and therefore require continuous adaptation. This is the trick for Universities. Investing in a dynamic manner.

Challenge: a lot of policies, but nothing is implemented. We should be looking into systematic implementation: step by step and stakeholders to be involved.

Looking into who is creating opportunities and who has access to them. Privilege (ex. being born in the right family, power and wealth)

Appendix 1

HIGHLIGHTS OF KEYNOTE REMARKS



Mr. Zakari Momodu

Projects Director, Aliko Dangote Foundation

Youth employability is a most relevant topic not just for Africa but for the entire globe. The purpose of these opening remarks is to challenge our thinking and solutions on the subject through the following reflections:

- Every human civilization across time has collapsed because success brings complacency and indulgence (in addition to external threats and pressures). So, it is critically important that we look within even as we look at the external issues. Today's societies and universities in particular should be conscious of this abiding lesson.
- Regarding youth employability– there are two key words to note: “employment” and “productivity”. The former assumes the pre-existence of jobs. The latter includes employment and enterprise i.e. job and wealth creation. There will never be enough suitable jobs. And someone has to create the environment and opportunities for jobs in the first place. This is enterprise. There is a general assumption that enterprise can be taught to all, but I tend to push back on that.
- Technology, society and lifestyles have moved on, but education methods have not. If you go to a classroom today, it is pretty much the same setup as a classroom one hundred years ago. In contrast, business and society look nothing like they used to.
- the notion of literacy - which is an artificial social construct – underpins our learning, our economy and our society because it is the best way of getting ideas across the wider audience and preserving information and knowledge. Perhaps literacy as a concept also needs to be updated along with the education system, particularly in a multi-lingual world.
- If we take it as an example of employability, unemployment and education, Nigeria has a growth rate of >3 % and a population of over 150 million people. Over the next decade, 3 to 5 million people will be entering into the labour market every year. How many of these will be educated or even literate in English or in any other language given that only about 500,000 graduate university each year? This is the reality of education and the labour market in Nigeria.
- Do I have answers for you? No. But I leave you with one more remark for you to ponder on: Societies' prosperity depends on a sustainable, viable middle class, which requires a minimum level of skills, resources, and opportunities. Without a viable middle class, any society is destined to collapse.
- when and where to invest.

Appendix 1

HIGHLIGHTS OF KEYNOTE REMARKS



Prof. Sunday A. Adebisi

Director, Entrepreneurship and Skills Development, University of Lagos

Over the last years the level of literacy has increased in Africa, but how many young people actually get a job? Even for those who are well educated, when they are done, how many of them get a decent job within the first five years after they graduate? How many jobs are created? In Africa there has been a yearly deficit of 90 million jobs for the last 10 years. In Nigeria, the youth unemployment rate is 42% and has led to social unrest.

There is a generational shift in almost every area of knowledge, so universities need to integrate what is happening in the industrial ecosystem to ensure that graduates are fit for purpose and ready for the workplace. Soft skills have become very important for young graduates, but they are not primarily incorporated into the curricula since most of the universities' curricula are discipline- focused. Nigeria has a huge population that is supposed to create greater potentials out of this population endowment. Rather, we have the challenge of consuming more than we produce; making us import far more than we export. We need a nation that produces and whose middle class is solid. Limited industrialization is a challenge, as well as the discouragement on the part of the youth not taking enough responsibility.

Entrepreneurship has been fundamental for the development of Europe and North America. African universities should be very active at promoting entrepreneurship and innovation in all areas of knowledge, as we do at University of Lagos. Young people need to understand that they have a lot to do and they need to realize that Africa is a land of opportunities. Young people need to rise up and take advantage of some of the new technologies. We need young entrepreneurs to establish companies that can attract foreign investors. Empowering the youth to engage in entrepreneurship is key to rescue the nation of Africa from the challenge of the unemployment crisis.

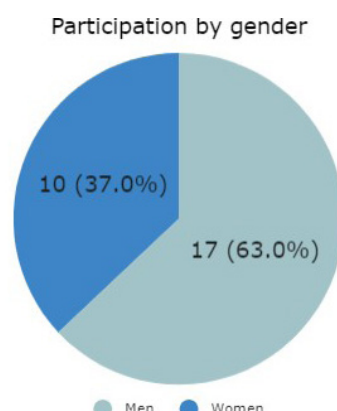
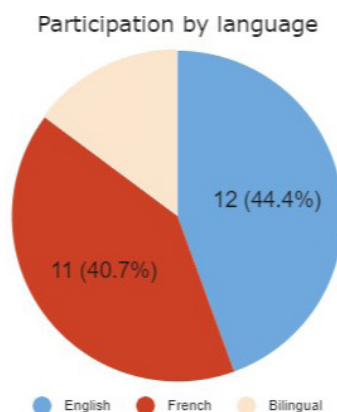
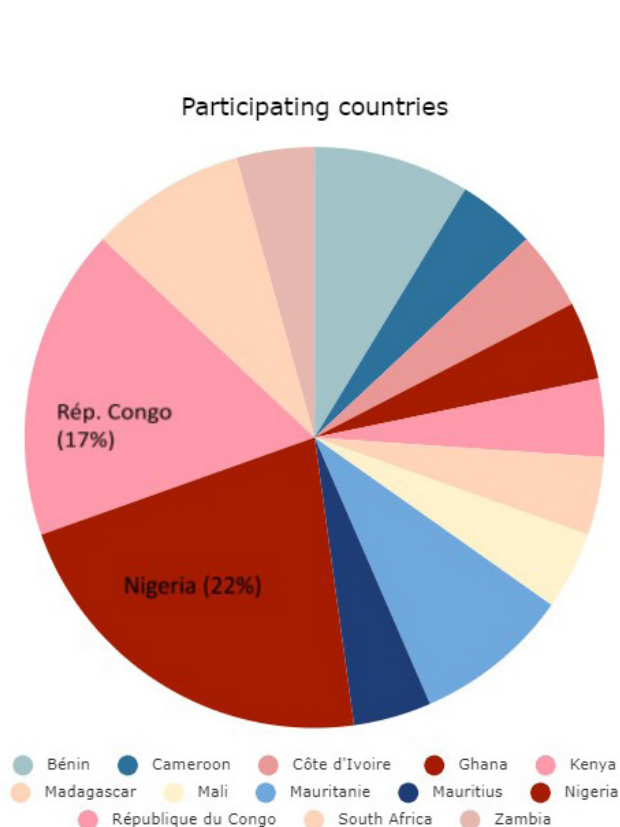
Appendix 2

PARTICIPATION SUMMARY

Total number of participants: 27

Total number of African organizations: 20

Number of African countries: 13



List of participating organizations

- Africa Centre for Development Finance (Ghana)
- Aliko Dangote Foundation (Nigeria)
- All-Africa Students Union (Ghana)
- BMGA Enterprise Limited (South Africa)
- Club Entrepreneurs Étudiants du Rendez-vous des Entrepreneurs (Madagascar)
- Commonwealth Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs – Africa (Zambia)
- Concordia University (Montreal)
- Congo Opportunités (Congo)
- Conseil Consultatif de la Jeunesse (Congo)
- Covenant University (Nigeria)
- Kosunga (Congo)
- Lata Africa Ventures (Cameroun)
- Mara Academy (Bénin)
- Mouvement De La Jeunesse Mauritanienne Pour Le Développement (Mauritania)
- Qui-Finance-Quoi AFRICA (Congo)
- Réseau National des Associations de Jeunes (Mauritania)
- Stellenbosch University (South Africa)
- Sup'Management (Mali)
- Vertu Kari Cosmétique (Benin)
- Virago Coaching (Mauritius)

Appendix 3

SUMMARY OF FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

The FutureWise team sent out a follow-up questionnaire asking participants about their experience during the summit. Nine participants responded the questionnaire. This appendix provides a summary of the most relevant responses. Quotes submitted in French are indicated as (FR).

Based on the information that was shared during the summit and on material that you may have read, can you describe in 2 sentences what FutureWise is about?

Preparing the youth of Africa to jobs in the future by identifying key challenges, creating strategies and partnering with solutions' providers.

Futurewise is a dialogue on the challenge of high youth unemployment in sub-Saharan Africa and possibilities for addressing it from the perspective of youth on the continent.

FutureWise is an initiative that aims to facilitate the economic and social integration of African youth. (FR)

Futurewise is a community-based platform through which we will have solutions to the problems related to entrepreneurship, employability, and investment in the human capital of young people (both men and women), in order to prepare them and connect them with all these opportunities to better solve the scourge of this century. (FR)

FUTUREWISE is a platform for reforming international education and employment systems, which enables innovative approaches. (FR)

In partnership with Concordia University and AUF, FutureWise wants to implement solutions to help young Africans find employment. (FR)

FutureWise is an initiative to prepare African youth for employment and entrepreneurship.

To do so, it seeks to create a bridge between the university and the industry. (FR)

What do you like the most out about FutureWise?

What I like about FutureWise is that it is exactly what I am marching for: helping many young professionals enter the world of work with more enthusiasm, a plan in mind and an envisioned purposeful future. I strongly believe and know for a fact, that we can, together, build a better future for the youth of today.

Futurewise is a dialogue on the challenge of high youth unemployment in sub-Saharan Africa and possibilities for addressing it from the perspective of youth on the continent.

1. Diversity: several actors from different sectors (education, development, finance, entrepreneurship, etc.) = coordinated and effective actions.
2. Advocacy: Commitment to promote African youth to decision-making bodies. (FR)

- The development of the entrepreneurial spirit concerning the youth within our current society.
- The connection between university and industry in order to better know the needs of the industry to better guide young students in their learning process.
- The creation of employment in order to benefit this our youth. (FR)

What did you like the most out about the summit?

- Meeting different professionals from different corners of the world.
- Ability to share opinions openly.
- Contributing to a greater purpose.

It was very interactive and insightful.

The spirit of collective intelligence, the richness of the exchanges and the possible solutions.
The participation of young people. (FR)

The cultural and linguistic diversity and similarity of our solutions. (FR)

The number of participants was reasonable. As a result, everyone had the opportunity to speak and express their thoughts. Result: a quality discussion! (FR)

The interaction and sharing. (FR)

The translation was perfect. The orientation of each room according to the chosen themes is also to be commended. (FR)

What was your main takeaway and what did you learn from the summit's breakout sessions (First block)?

Upskilling of the youth to what is currently relevant in terms of competencies in today's world of work, such as innovation, critical thinking, creative problem solving, entrepreneurial skills.

Youth to be more socially and emotionally aware so that they can forge strong relationships and partnerships in their career, especially in an environment of virtual work.

Equip the youth with the right mindset so that they are better able to respond to the world of work.

A multi-stakeholder approach characterized by real actions in the short, medium and long term must be adopted in order to address the youth employment challenge comprehensively over the long term.

Session #1

The youth employment challenge cuts across countries and the factors are similar. There is a need to rethink the approach to education and harness digitalization and new technologies to open up more opportunities for young people.

Session #1

The problem of employability has the same difficulty despite the respective differences in our countries' contexts.

Session #2 (FR)

I had rather this confirmation that the professional integration of young people is a real challenge, and that there is a lot to do.

Session #1 (FR)

Entrepreneurship is the key to youth employability.

Session #3 (FR)

Several challenges: access to education for all, mismatch between training and business needs, insignificant number of jobs created compared to the number of new graduates, etc.

Opportunities: African youth has never been so creative! The health crisis has proven this. Several bold projects deserve to be supported.

The promotion of youth entrepreneurship is the best way to face the current challenges on the African continent.

Unfortunately, the private actors of the accompaniment upstream of the creation of companies are cruelly lacking in support.

Session #1 (FR)

What was your main takeaway and what did you learn from the summit's breakout sessions (second block)?

Universities to align with job providers in both Public and Private sectors with regards to what are the current recruitment and competency needs of the industry and country.

To put more accountability on job providers to communicate their needs to educational institutions, so that the latter may prepare the outgoing graduates.

Universities to focus on developing business acumen, work ethics, professional skills development to prepare the youth for the world of work.

More transparent meet-ups where concrete action plans are being devised and appointing representatives who are accountable in achieving the plan.

Session #7

Our education must move away from traditional focus to the digital age. The youth employment situation could worsen if the government and the private sector in Africa do not strategically invest in the digital economy.

Session #5

FutureWise's role should be to ensure that the academic and business worlds are well coordinated and that young Africans are ready to meet the challenges of their time.

Session #8 (FR)

Making the most of digital technology to create value and many jobs, regardless of the sector.

Session #5 (FR)

The energy sector is an indispensable sector in our daily activities.

There is still a problem of energy accessibility in some parts of the world.

Session #5 (FR)

Green energies are a good alternative to overcome the energy deficit of the continent. To democratize them, it will be necessary to work in the direction of a better mobilization of financial resources in favour of the carriers of projects.

Session #5 (FR)

FutureWise should think about better studying its approach to solutions in order to better identify the issues and not do the same thing as other organizations by not really addressing the issue in their contribution to solutions towards the economic integration of youth in Africa.

Session #8 (FR)