

# Youth Empowerment as a Pathway towards Attaining the Demographic Dividend in Sub-Saharan Africa: Evidence from Ghana

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## Abstract

While empowerment of the youth in Ghana could enable them to make a more meaningful contribution to the economy, a myriad of challenges faces the youth during their transition from school into the employment sector and limits the realisation of their full potential. As a result, the recent and significant increase in the size of the youth population in Ghana cannot justifiably be romanticised as an obvious stepping stone towards the realisation of a demographic dividend. In this study, qualitative and quantitative research methods were deployed to carry out a cross-sectional survey that enabled a detailed exploration of the main challenges and opportunities facing the youth in Ghana. Some of the options for enabling greater youth empowerment in the country were also identified. The study established that unemployment, skills limitations, lack of access to finance, and poorly coordinated institutional structures for implementing youth empowerment policies and programmes are major barriers to youth empowerment in Ghana. We conclude that there is a need for more targeted interventions that address these challenges and leverage any evident opportunities available for increased youth empowerment before Ghana can confidently expect to reap a demographic dividend.

**Keywords:** Ghana; demographic dividend; youth empowerment; policy; capacity-building



## Introduction

Within the context of aspirations for attaining a demographic dividend and achieving the sustainable development goals in Ghana and other developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), the need to empower the youth and enable them to make a more meaningful contribution to society becomes very pertinent. However, a myriad of challenges faces the youth during their transition into adulthood such that the recent but significant increase in the size of the youth population (youth bulge) in Ghana and other countries in SSA cannot be justifiably romanticised as an obvious stepping stone towards the realisation of a demographic dividend (Kabiru, Izugbara, and Beguy 2013; United Nations 2007). On the one hand, if properly harnessed, the changes in the demographic profile of Ghana could be utilised as an opportunity for attaining better socio-economic growth and poverty reduction through empowering the youth and enabling them to realise their full potential (World Bank 2011). On the other hand, it would also be quite short-sighted to take it for granted that successful conversion into a demographic dividend will automatically result from the mere existence of a youth bulge in the country (Ahmed et al. 2014; Blum et al. 2012; Kabiru, Undie, and Ezeh 2010). There are several barriers to active youth participation in national socio-economic development processes that should be clearly understood and addressed before one can expect the realisation of a demographic dividend in Ghana (Gribble and Bremner 2012).

This article articulates the challenges and opportunities faced by the youth in Ghana with a view to pinpointing avenues for greater youth empowerment, active participation in the country's socio-economic development processes, and possible pathways for their successful transition into adulthood. The main research question that the paper seeks to answer is: What works and what does not work in youth empowerment and how best can challenges faced in Ghana be addressed to ensure that the youth are fully empowered, realise their full potential, and meaningfully contribute to the economy? Answering this question requires close analysis of the appropriateness and extent of implementation of the Ghanaian youth policy (Republic of Ghana 2010) as well as the effectiveness of the institutional structures established to support youth development in the country. It also requires a detailed examination of some of the specific interventions already made to date by various actors in the development sector to address the challenges and opportunities that the youth face in the country.

During the study, we paid particular attention to a number of enduring questions that seem crucial to understanding the youth development dilemma in Ghana and other countries in SSA. For example, why do African countries such as Ghana, Ivory Coast and Botswana that have experienced much better national economic growth than others in recent decades still struggle with empowering the youth and enabling them to transition into more productive adults? What are the crucial but missing policy and institutional ingredients that could make these countries embrace youth empowerment in such a way that it translates into a meaningful demographic dividend, with their

economies reaching higher levels of productivity? In this article, we interrogate some of the policy and institutional dimensions that determine youth development outcomes, the main challenges and opportunities facing the youth in Ghana, and options through which these may be addressed. Findings from the study are intended to inform the agenda of policymakers and practitioners who grapple continuously with the challenge of improving the socio-economic condition of the youth in Ghana and other countries in SSA where a similar youth bulge is experienced. The findings also contribute to ongoing international discourses about the building blocks for attaining a demographic dividend in developing countries.

## Background to the Study

Youth empowerment lies at the centre of discourses on youth development and the attainment of a demographic dividend in Ghana and elsewhere. An empowered youth will be able to easily transition into the world of work such that the national dependency ratio declines. As an analytical construct, youth empowerment may be viewed as the basket of collective efforts that are made within families, organisations, and communities, involving processes and structures that enhance the youths' skills and provide them with the support they need to be part of positive societal change, and improve their well-being and quality of life (Jennings et al. 2006). Among other things, youth empowerment implies an expansion of the youth's ability to make strategic life choices in a situation where that ability was previously denied, challenging and possibly destabilising existing unequal power relations in society through a transformative process (Paciello and Pioppi 2014). According to Martínez et al. (2017), among many scholars there is unanimity on the term "youth empowerment" generally referring to the young person achieving efficient growth by overcoming specific situations through the acquisition of competences. It is a concept requiring that researchers shift from seeing youth (i.e., children and adolescents) as problems to viewing them as human resources with useful ideas and a voice for meaningful participatory action and socio-economic development (Morton and Montgomery 2011; Wong, Zimmerman, and Parker 2010). The foregoing suggests that adding the voice of the youth would enable the crafting of relevant youth development programmes that indirectly contribute to national efforts towards attaining a demographic dividend.

The available literature also indicates that embedded within definitions of youth empowerment are a couple of key distinct elements that require clear articulation (see Abrefah 2003; Ahmed et al. 2014; Canning, Raja, and Yazbeck 2015). The first is transformation of societal power relations in such a way that the youth exercise more agency and take action to determine the course of their lives. Secondly, the youth's access to and control over resources is broadened such that they get more opportunities to reach their full potential. Thirdly, specific changes are deliberately made to ensure that the institutional structures that shape the lives and futures of the youth become more supportive. An equally important component is the voice of the youth beginning to count in the corridors of power at local and national levels. Therefore, in Ghana and other

countries of SSA where systemic and cultural barriers to youth inclusion in socio-economic development processes abound, youth empowerment should be understood as a process that significantly transforms existing exclusionary power relations between the youth and adults that can only be achieved through bottom-up processes rather than top-down strategies (Paciello and Pioppi 2014). In this context, it is critical to point out that the emergence of a youth bulge in Ghana has made youth empowerment a priority as the country grapples with the challenge of accommodating larger numbers of youth in the labour market and the economy at large than has been experienced in previous decades.

Failure to empower the youth and accommodate them in the labour market has a direct bearing on Ghana's aspirations for attaining a demographic dividend since the youth dependency ratio is likely to worsen. Ideally, a demographic dividend would be expected when changes in the age structure of a country's population occur as it transitions from high to low birth and death rates, leading to accelerated economic growth, an increase in the working-age population, and a decrease in the youth dependency ratio (AFIDEP 2018; Dufrenot 2018; Gribble and Bremner 2012). Countries such as Thailand and Brazil are known to have reaped many rewards from their demographic dividend, based on successful implementation of supportive national policies over the long term (Drummond et al. 2014; Ibrahima 2019). However, there are many policymakers and analysts who mistakenly assume that a demographic dividend will automatically result from a large population of youth relative to the population of working-age adults, without necessarily changing demographic, social and economic policies (Ahmed et al. 2014).

Several scholars are agreed that a demographic dividend will not occur if national strategic choices and policies are not made in such a way that they embrace and integrate the youth factor while enhancing the relative autonomy of youths as actors, (re)shaping social relations and power formations and improving youth agency (Abbink 2005; Ahmed et al. 2014; Akwetey 2006). This suggests the need for coordinated and collective efforts that are made to nurture and support activities promoting the socio-economic, emotional, physical, cultural, moral and academic well-being of young people (Abrefah 2003). This is also a perspective that treats youth empowerment as a process rather than a once-off intervention. It recognises that if provided with the necessary support structures, policies, institutions and systems, young people can be empowered to improve the quality of their own lives and transition smoothly into adulthood (Abrefah 2003). The flip side of this scenario is a situation where sufficient space and platforms for youth to participate in socio-economic development processes are not provided such that it becomes quite difficult for the youth to transform their potential and become effective agents of change (Akwetey 2006).

A myriad of challenges have emerged and reinforced one another to push Ghana and other countries in SSA away from the much sought after demographic dividend towards a demographic disaster (Gribble and Bremner 2012; Ibrahima 2019). These challenges

include rapid but unsustainable urbanisation trends characterised by, among others, rising levels of poverty and inequality, and very resilient and consistently rising levels of unemployment and underemployment (Ahmed et al. 2014). The African Youth Charter defines the “youth” or “young people” as every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years (AU 2006). This is also the definition of “youth” used by the government of Ghana, and a substantial portion of the population in Ghana is constituted by the youth. The population of Ghana is estimated to have increased by at least 30% from the official 2010 census figure of 24.2 million to about 31.7 million in 2021, with the youth constituting about 34% of the population (UN 2021).

The increase in the number of youth in Ghana and overall working-age population is supposed to have created a window of opportunity, which, if properly harnessed, would translate into higher economic growth and yield a demographic dividend, but this has not happened. Indeed, evidence from Ghana suggests that enabling the youth to realise their full potential and reach a demographic dividend is neither as straightforward as it is often portrayed in theory nor is it necessarily imminent (see Drumond 2014; Ibrahima 2019). Today’s generation of young people is the largest ever in Ghana’s history, and yet policies for the social sectors often fail to properly target and empower them or analyse their unique priorities and needs (Korboe 2014). In 2017, the youth dependency ratio for the country was about 67.1%, which is relatively high even though it has slightly declined from 69.5% in 2010 (CIA 2018). This suggests that the high national economic growth experienced in Ghana in recent decades has failed to rapidly translate into decent, gainful and productive employment generation and as a result, a large proportion of the youth is unemployed (Baah-Boateng 2013). As Cilliers (2018) points out, on its current demographic trajectory, Ghana and other low- and middle-income African states are several decades away from achieving a demographic dividend.

In this article we argue that even though there is already a large number of pessimistic forecasts characterising most of the analyses on the youth bulge experienced in Ghana, a demographic disaster does not necessarily need to be treated as inevitable. If Ghana comes up with the right intervention strategies for empowering the youth and addressing other economic fundamentals, the prospects for realising a demographic dividend may be brighter. As the African Development Bank (AfDB 2015) points out, making the most of the potential demographic bonus for inclusive and sustainable growth will require tapping into and leveraging opportunities available in the local economy, which too often have been neglected. Appropriate policy choices and actions could transform the youth of Ghana into a healthy, educated, and empowered labour force that contributes to real and sustained economic development and growth whilst lifting many people out of poverty (Canning, Raja, and Yazbeck 2015; Eastwood and Lipton 2011). Indeed, there is empirical evidence of similar demographic transitions having boosted socio-economic growth in South East Asian countries and Brazil (Ahmed et al. 2014; Bloom, Canning, and Malaney 2000; Ibrahima 2019).

## Study Methodology

This article is the result of an exploratory cross-sectional survey carried out to explore the dynamics of youth development processes in Ghana. Both secondary and primary data was collected, paying special attention to the socio-economic challenges and opportunities that the youth face and avenues for greater youth empowerment. Whilst Ghana defines the youth as those between 15 and 35 years of age, for this study, we focused mainly on those youths between 18 and 35 years of age, mainly because we assumed that this is the age group that already has sufficient experience in life to provide us with a rich narrative of their own socio-economic development journey. We undertook an extensive review of the published and grey literature, government policy documents, and excerpts from expert commentaries to get a good foundational understanding of the youth development landscape in Ghana. We also sought to articulate the major impacts of interventions implemented by governmental and non-governmental agencies to address youth development challenges and empowerment opportunities in the country.

For the purposes of this study, the “youth as a resource” conceptual framework was used to guide the development of the overall research strategy. This is a framework that broadly views the youth as agents of change rather than societal problems (see DFID-CSO Youth in Action Group 2010). We assumed that listening to the voices of the youth is critical to the formulation of appropriate policies and strategic interventions for their empowerment. Thus, during data collection we deployed qualitative research methods that enabled us to work very closely with the youth, solicit and capture their views. Empirical data collection was conducted from June to July in 2018 in greater Accra and Tamale and their surroundings to obtain cross-sectional data that reveals the prevailing situation on the ground regarding youth empowerment. The data collection was constituted by a rapid cross-sectional survey that was done using a structured questionnaire exclusively targeting the youth, in-depth interviews with 20 selected key stakeholders and experts in the youth development sector in Accra and Tamale using a semi-structured questionnaire, and focus group discussions held with the youth in the study sites to obtain their perceptions regarding the empowerment challenges and opportunities they face as well as possible solutions.

A non-probability sampling framework was deployed to select interviewees for the survey, with emphasis on gender balance and relatively equal coverage of the various categories that the researchers considered critical to the articulation of youth development issues in Ghana. Purposive sampling was done for key informants, targeting representatives of organisations that are already known to be active in the youth development sector. Research assistants in Accra and Tamale rural, peri-urban, and urban areas were recruited and trained to help with the data collection. Special attention was given to the gender disaggregated issues affecting vulnerable youth in the study sites. The qualitative data gathered was analysed as per the predetermined thematic areas of youth policy, programmes, participation, and empowerment.

Quantitative data was analysed using Stata and presented as descriptive statistics mainly using measures of central tendency.

## Ethics Clearance

Ethics clearance and approval for the study were obtained from the Human Sciences Research Council Scientific Ethics Committee in South Africa before empirical data collection began. Study participants were also requested to give written and signed informed consent after being briefed about the study goals and objectives and the voluntary nature of their participation.

## Study Findings

A total of 208 respondents aged between 18–35 years were recruited for the cross-sectional survey. Table 1 presents a breakdown of the sample for the survey according to where the study participants were based during the time of the interview and their general distribution across key categories such as gender and occupational status.

**Table 1:** Study sample

Category	Urban		Rural/ Peri-urban		Total	Percentage
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Public formal employment	21	16	11	9	57	27.40
Private formal employment	10	10	4	4	28	13.46
Informal employment	13	12	7	5	37	17.79
Self-employed	5	4	3	3	15	7.21
Students	5	4	5	5	19	9.14
National Service and Interns	8	5	5	5	23	11.06
Unemployed	10	8	6	5	29	13.94
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100</b>

$n = 208$

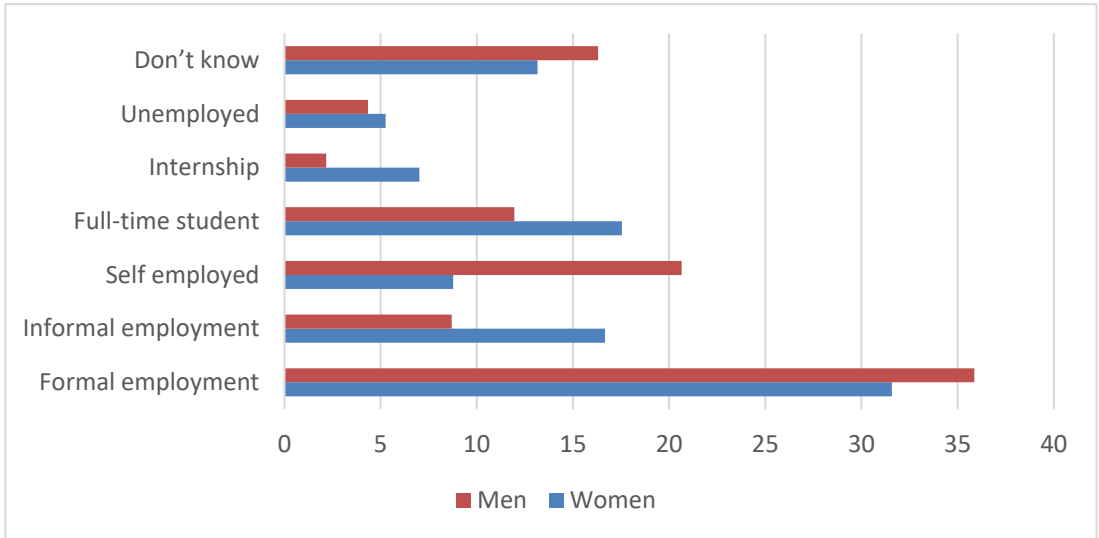
The data presented in Table 1 shows that more respondents (62.98%) were interviewed in the urban areas than in the rural and peri-urban areas (37.02%). There were also more male respondents (54.33%) than females (45.67%) in the total sample.

Levels of sustainable employment are often used as a good indicator of youth empowerment. In our study sites, most of the employed respondents indicated that they were working in the public sector (27.4%), while 13.94% of the respondents were not employed at all. Also worth noting is the substantial number of respondents who were either self-employed (7.21%) or employed in the informal sector (18%), which generally reflects the existing labour market patterns and limited opportunities for formal employment in the study sites.

In terms of the rural-urban dichotomy, more urban youths (27.4%) were employed in the formal sector than their rural and peri-urban counterparts (13.5%). This could be explained by the fact that there are usually more formal employment opportunities in urban areas (due to industrialisation processes) than in rural and peri-urban areas. It is also interesting to note that more youths in urban areas were employed in the informal sector than their rural/peri-urban counterparts. This may suggest increased rural-urban migration among the youth, most of whom subsequently get employed in the urban informal sector. In addition, more rural/peri-urban youths were also unemployed compared to their urban counterparts, underpinning the main motivations for rural-urban migration.

When employment is disaggregated by gender, the pattern that emerges shows that more male youths work in the formal sector than female youths. The reverse is true in the informal sector where there are more females than males. However, as shown in Figure 1, the overall pattern of employment among the respondents shows more male youths being employed than their female counterparts.

Education is another key indicator of levels of youth empowerment as it enables them to be more competitive in the labour market. The majority of those interviewed during the survey were holders of a first degree (32.21%). This was followed closely by respondents holding high school or diploma level qualifications (at 23% and 24% respectively). Overall, the level of education was relatively high among the youths interviewed during this study.



**Figure 1:** Current occupation of the youth disaggregated by gender

When requested to identify the most pertinent youth development challenge in Ghana at the moment, the respondents mainly identified the issues outlined in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Most pressing youth development challenges

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Unemployment	182	87.5
Underemployment or lack of decent jobs	6	2.88
HIV Aids	3	1.44
Poverty	6	2.88
Unproductive attitudes of the youth (including peer pressure)	1	0.48
Lack of education or poor education	5	2.4
Inflation and high prices of goods	1	0.48
Unsupportive political environment	1	0.48
Lack of youth participation in development processes	1	0.48
Lack of entrepreneurship skills	2	0.96
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100</b>

$n = 208$

The data in Table 2 shows that an overwhelming majority of the respondents (87.5%) identified unemployment as the most pressing challenge requiring urgent attention. In addition, poverty was identified by a substantial number of the respondents (29.95%) as the second most pressing challenge in Ghana. Other significant challenges identified as

pertinent include lack of entrepreneurship skills (22%), and lack of education or poor education (17.11%). Both of these have a direct bearing on youth empowerment possibilities.

The findings we obtained from focus group discussions and key informant interviews carried out during this study also confirmed unemployment as the greatest challenge facing the youth. This also resonates very well with most of the expert commentaries on youth development in Ghana that we reviewed. These results were not significantly different according to the age group, geographical location or gender of the respondent.

The respondents were also requested to identify the main opportunities that the youths have that could be leveraged to address their empowerment and development needs. The results for this question are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Opportunities available to the youth

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Access to micro-finance and credit	35	9.72
Access to good education	61	16.94
Access to entrepreneurship	24	6.67
Capacity-building programmes	26	7.22
Jobs	15	4.17
Self-employment	65	18.06
Scholarships	16	4.44
Access to the internet	82	22.78
Don't know	5	1.39

$n = 208$

Access to the internet was cited more frequently than all the other variables (22.78%) as a readily available instrument for youth development, particularly how it enables them to get access to information relevant for the various opportunities that they can utilise to empower themselves. A substantial number (18%) of the respondents also identified self-employment as an opportunity available to the youth. This could also partly explain the high number of youth who are self-employed in the country. Other useful opportunities highlighted by the respondents include access to good education, micro-finance, and capacity-building programmes.

We asked whether or not there are any platforms created by the government for the youth to discuss development plans and processes in the country. The majority of the respondents (64%) believed that there were no platforms created by the government to enable the youth in Ghana to discuss development plans and processes in the country. Only 15.27% of the respondents stated that such platforms have been created by the government. A low level of youth representation in the formulation and implementation of youth policies is consistent with the absence of platforms that could facilitate access to voices of the youth as a basis for youth policy formulation and implementation.

We were also keen to find out the extent to which the youth have been involved in income-generating projects or programmes initiated and run by a government department as part of their empowerment and specifically targeting the youth in Ghana. The responses we received showed that the majority (89.32%) of the respondents have not been involved in income-generating projects or programmes initiated and run by a government department specifically targeting the youth. Only 6.25% of the respondents had been involved in this manner. This suggests that there have been very few income-generating projects or programmes initiated by the government to specifically empower the youth economically in the country. This is also consistent with a situation where opportunities for participation in entrepreneurial development programmes as a means of empowering the youth and creating jobs are not readily available.

Focus group discussions held during this study reconfirmed the pertinence of unemployment and underemployment as major challenges that the youth are acutely aware of. Whilst the youth indicated that they are eager to get jobs and uplift themselves out of poverty, they often fail to get the opportunities they need to obtain sustainable employment. This forces them to engage in activities that dehumanise them such as street-hawking, petty crimes and theft. Poor quality of education, a widespread lack of appropriate skills, and limited access to finance for small enterprises were also identified as key barriers to youth entrepreneurship. For example, one respondent during the focus groups stated that “the education curriculum is mainly theory-based, leaving the graduates with no skills at the end of the course; therefore, vocational training should be fused into the curriculum so as to provide the youth with some skills on completion.”

A fundamental mistake that almost all the key informants we engaged during this study cited is the creation of a multiplicity of uncoordinated government and non-governmental agencies that have the mandate of directly addressing youth empowerment in the country from various entry points. Several of these agencies have overlapping responsibilities such that if they were working in collaboration, they would most likely realise more impact on the ground. Instead, they have achieved limited impact, with duplication of effort and activities being the norm rather than the exception, particularly in the areas of skills training, apprenticeships, and entrepreneurship support initiatives that tend to target the same population group without necessarily complementing one another. The foregoing suggests that there is a lot of room for better coordination of the interventions and the agencies tasked to address youth

empowerment and employment in the country. This would enable inter-organisational learning and subsequent optimisation of the limited resources available.

## Discussion

The data gathered during this exploratory study reveals serious gaps and weaknesses in terms of targeted youth empowerment interventions in Ghana. There is also very minimal involvement of the youth in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes that are relevant to the challenges and opportunities they face. While there are several priority areas for consideration in efforts to address youth empowerment in Ghana, unemployment, underemployment, and a general lack of decent jobs for both the educated and uneducated youths remain the most urgent socio-economic challenges facing the country. However, while all the youth have limited access to sustainable jobs, females are more affected than males in this regard.

The study also established that the number of youths who have low-paying and sometimes indecent jobs in the formal and informal sectors is very high. This suggests that the efforts so far made by government agencies to address unemployment have not realised the intended outcomes in any systematic and predictable manner. In addition, it seems that the exceptionally high levels of economic growth realised in Ghana have also not necessarily translated into more jobs for the youth, and thus the employment sector has not been able to absorb the majority of new entrants into the labour market.

Our findings also show that rural and peri-urban youth are more likely to be unemployed than urban youth, but more likely to be self-employed than their urban counterparts. In addition, female youths are more likely to be unemployed compared to their male counterparts. This means that the youths based in rural areas and females are much more affected by the unemployment challenge than their counterparts in urban areas. This suggests that measures to address unemployment should take into account nuanced understandings of the rural-urban dichotomy as well as the gender dimensions of the challenge. Limited access to relevant information about career development and labour market opportunities also worsens the capacity of the youth to find decent jobs. The need to match tertiary education curriculum and skills development interventions to the needs of industries emerges as vital while the creation of a multiplicity of uncoordinated agencies dealing with youth empowerment is cited as a serious barrier to progress.

Overall, the findings suggest the need for targeted interventions that improve youth agency when trying to address the whole spectrum of challenges that the youth face. This speaks to the imperatives for building youth technical capacity and skills within and outside the confines of the national educational system. For instance, wider provision of entrepreneurship training specifically for the youth is likely to go a long way in upskilling them for self-employment. In addition, increasing greater access to information for the youth through contemporary internet-based platforms appears to be a low-hanging fruit in the fight to empower the youth.

## Conclusion

In this exploratory study, we set out to identify what works and what does not work in addressing youth empowerment in Ghana and how best to address evident challenges and opportunities in this domain. An analysis of the data gathered suggests that the country has reached a critical juncture between crisis and opportunity which the youth bulge engenders. It is apparent that Ghana needs to find workable solutions that ensure full empowerment of the youth and reduce the youth-dependency burden. It is also increasingly clear that the country's economy has failed to create sustainable and decent jobs in sufficient numbers to absorb the youth into the labour market. As a result, unemployment and underemployment remain pertinent challenges. While all the youths are negatively affected, female and rural youths suffer more than their counterparts. The multiple constraints that the youth face include lack of appropriate skills for the job market and entrepreneurship, work experience, and access to credit for establishing their own business enterprises. In this regard, further promotion of targeted out-of-school skills development, youth entrepreneurship, and improved access to finance should be part of the broader basket of solutions that may be implemented to empower the youth. This also includes systematically restructuring the educational system to equip more graduates with the skills they need to function effectively in the work place. Such interventions will go a long way in improving the quality of Ghana's labour pool.

The informal sector in Ghana appears to have expanded and provides opportunities for the youth to be active in the economy even though most of the informal jobs they get are not sufficiently decent and sustainable. While the government of Ghana has played a leading role in the implementation of the youth development agenda and addressing evident challenges in this terrain over the years, its implementation machinery has not managed to deliver the expected results. In this regard, effective coordination across different sectors and government agencies is required. In addition, any new interventions for empowering the youth in Ghana and enabling their active participation in the country's socio-economic development processes should be as inclusive as possible, bringing together various government agencies, NGOs, the private sector, development partners, and the youth themselves, to dialogue and address the challenges faced in the sector. Listening to the voices of the youth is certainly vital as it helps in pinpointing the most relevant and effective interventions. In addition, the development of supportive legislation, administrative structures and a more effective implementation framework could also enable the achievement of a new agenda for youth empowerment that will move the country towards realising a demographic dividend.

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