Human Capital Snapshot
one billion people, one billion opportunities

Job Creation in Côte d’Ivoire: The AfDB Backs Youth

In the aftermath of the 2010-11 political crisis, Cote d’Ivoire is now ready for an economic takeoff, with growth estimated at 9.1% (2014). There are however some structural challenges, particularly with regards to high youth unemployment, which needs to be addressed to ensure that this growth is inclusive and sustainable.

Youth Unemployment: Challenges and Opportunities

In 2013 Cote d’Ivoire had 745,000 unemployed people, representing 6.7% of the working population. Young people are the most affected, particularly young women.

Unemployment in Cote d’Ivoire is partly due to a decade of political and economic crisis. However, it results mainly from low quality and relevance of education and training, and a significant shortage of technical and professional skills. In 2009, more than one-quarter of the formal sector enterprises highlighted that the poor quality of labour was an obstacle to their competitiveness.

Since 2009, Côte d’Ivoire has undertaken series of measures to address this monumental challenge and to gradually change the profile of the future workforce. A large-scale education sector project was launched involving: (i) restructuring of the institutional framework; (ii) diversification of training and private sector involvement; (iii) improvement of the quality of education; and (iv) better governance in the education and training sectors. The National Employment Policy, adopted in 2012, is in its third year of implementation.
In 2013, the African Development Bank financed a USD 30 million Youth Employability and Insertion Support Programme (PAAEIJ) whose objective is to (i) improve youth employability by targeting medium and long-term reforms that can help change the profile of the future workforce, by making it more competitive and consistent with the needs of the private sector; and (ii) job creation for 2,000 unskilled young people (40% women) while ensuring that the jobs created are sustainable.

Five major results have been achieved to date:

1. **Jobs were created in public utility works for a first wave of 1,000 young people, including 49% women.** These young people come from 10 municipalities/localities. A second wave of 1,000 young people from 18 other municipalities is planned. The program seeks to create sustainable jobs. It uses a financing mechanism that includes a partial guarantee from municipalities; trains young people in various occupations and supports them in developing business ideas; promotes a savings/investment culture; and monitors micro-businesses after their creation.

2. **Since 2013, a taskforce consisting of enterprises and schools was set up to reinforce the linkages between industry and education system.** Anchored within the private sector in Cote d’Ivoire this task force is a public-private collaboration platform to address the skills mismatch problem.

### Key Figures
- Population : 20.3 million
- GDP growth: 7.9%
- Poverty rate: 48.9% in 2008
- 30 000 small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
- 36% of the population between 15-35 years old

### Employment
- Nearly 800 000 unemployed (745 000 unemployed in 2013, or 6.7% of the working population
- 8.6% of youths are unemployed (14-35 years); high unemployment among young graduates (17% for higher education and 25% for technical and vocational schools)
- 12% unemployment among young women vs. 5.6% for young men.
- 28.2% children (5-17 years old) were economically active (31% girls and 26% boys)
- Sectors with high employment potential: cocoa (40% of world production), coffee, cotton, cassava, palm oil, banana, rubber.

### Key Documents
3. **Creating a culture of monitoring and evaluation to measure the relevance of the education system.** An inventory of existing training provided in secondary schools, vocational centers and higher education institutions as well as a mechanism to monitor the employability of graduates were established. A roadmap was designed to extend these mechanisms to all education institutions. The project provided technical assistance to two pilot institutions in order to support them in collecting information on the employability of their graduates. By the end of 2015, the first national survey will provide baseline data on the relative efficiency of the various sub-sectors in terms of their capacity to place their graduates into the labor market.

4. **Improved efficiency and governance of the education sector.** An education-training sector coordination agency was created by Prime Minister’s office in January 2015. The agency operationalized by an Inter-Ministerial Order signed by the Minister of Economy and Finance; Minister of Budget; and the three Ministers in charge of the education-training sectors (namely national education and technical education, employment and vocational training, and higher education and scientific research). For the first time, performance contracts were signed between the Ministry of Higher Education and two public universities. The contracts are intended to encourage universities to improve the employability of their graduates, as well as the relevance of their research programmes.

5. **Promotion and development of scientific research for technological innovation.** A national feasibility study was conducted to set up an office whose function would be to see how to make better use of research results. This office will ultimately help develop local entrepreneurship through SMEs derived from research findings, as well as support the development of technologies and job creation.

In Yamoussoukro, a brigade “leader” presents his team, the activities undertaken so far, and informs the AfDB delegation of the difficulties encountered and their employability after their 6-month mission. Supervision mission of the African Development Bank (AfDB), March 2015

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