



International
Labour
Organization

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Work4Youth: The MasterCard Foundation’s Partnership with the ILO

Young people represent the promise of changing societies for the better. Yet, there are not enough decent jobs for them. Their transitions to the labour market are long and difficult, and even more so since the global recession in 2008 and 2009. The global youth unemployment rate in 2013 was 12.6 per cent and as many as 73 million young people were estimated to be unemployed. At the same time, informal employment among young people remains pervasive and transitions to decent work are slow and difficult. The economic and social cost of extended periods of large-scale unemployment, discouragement, and widespread low-quality jobs for young people continues to grow.

It is therefore a compelling priority of governments across the world to address the youth employment challenge through effective policy measures. Availability of data on the characteristics and extent of the challenge is a prerequisite to designing relevant policy and programmatic initiatives at the country level. ILO constituents have emphasized this message within the Resolution on Youth Employment (‘The youth employment crisis: A call for action’) adopted at the 101st International Labour Conference of the ILO held in Geneva in June 2012.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Partners:

The MasterCard Foundation

Beneficiary Countries:

Global – 28 countries in all regions

Timeframe:

2011 – 2016

Budget:

USD 14,600,000

THE RESPONSE

The partnership between the ILO and The MasterCard Foundation, namely ‘Work4Youth’, focuses on knowledge development and dissemination and it is fully in line with the 2012 Resolution. The field of intervention of the project is data collection and analysis oriented towards policy formulation. The main research focus is the transitions of young people to the labour market.

Over a life time of five years, Work4Youth will output national, regional and global-level studies, mostly based on evidence from school-to-work transition surveys (SWTSs) run in twenty-eight countries. The SWTS is an ILO research tool designed to collect up-to-date and nationally representative data focusing on the youth labour market and the transition of young people from education into the world of work. National data is synthesized into national reports analyzing findings and proposing policy recommendations.

These reports are shared with constituents at national workshops where the findings are reviewed and policy follow-up is discussed with the assistance of the ILO. At the regional and global level, data from national surveys are pulled together to allow analysis and recommendations with regional and global scope. Events and publications disseminate this knowledge to researchers and experts on youth employment. In addition, the project shares both SWTS data and qualitative analyses of youth employment policies in target countries through two global databases, YouthSTATS and YouthPOL.

Partnerships and Field Support Department (PARDEV)

International Labour Organization
4, Route des Morillons
CH-1211 Geneva-22 – Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 799 7309

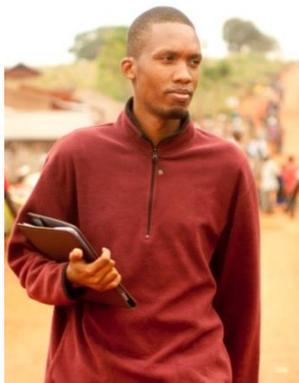
Fax: +41 22 799 6668

E-mail: ppp@ilo.org

www.ilo.org/ppp



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“The MasterCard Foundation is proud to partner with the ILO to provide accurate and timely youth employment and education data to policy makers around the world as they seek to tackle the challenge of youth employment”

Deepali Khanna, Director of the Youth Learning Programme of the MasterCard Foundation



RESULTS

Before the end of the project it is expected that the data produced with the support of the project will have contributed to the youth employment policy dialogue in several of the target countries. It is also expected that international research on youth employment issues will benefit from the wealth of fresh and nationally representative data made globally available by Work4Youth.

To-date: a first round of SWTS has been completed and has reached more than 102,000 young people. The project is working with labour market experts from around the world to produce the national-level analytical reports summarizing the findings ([7 have been released so far](#)). A regional report concerning Labour market transitions of young women and men in Sub-Saharan Africa was launched in December 2013, and similar reports will be launched in 2014 in Asia and the Pacific and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The project has also published a thematic report on Informal employment among youth, while a publication on youth and rural employment is forthcoming. Findings from the surveys fed into the 2013 edition of the Global Employment Trends for Youth, the ILO flagship publication on the subject of youth employment.

All reports published to date can be accessed at:

www.ilo.org/w4y

BENEFITS OF PARTNERING

The Foundation and the ILO has a shared belief in the importance of generating high quality evidence and data so we can work with our partners to help design better programmes at the country, regional, and global level.

The Foundation is focused on helping young people successfully transition from adolescence in to adulthood. It works to equip disadvantaged young people with secondary and tertiary education, equip them with market-relevant skills, and create and expand their economic opportunities. As part of this work, data plays an important role in our design, delivery, and evaluation of programmes.

The Foundation is part of a large community of leaders from government, NGOs, and the private sector that works to address the challenges facing disadvantaged young people in developing countries. The community is hungry for new and high quality data, and the Foundation’s partnership with the ILO represents a significant effort to create and disseminate a new body of knowledge among policy leaders and decision makers from around the world.

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