



CSV

Centre for the Study of  
Violence and Reconciliation

# Youth Inclusion in Socio-Economic and Livelihood Programmes

Potential for fostering social cohesion  
and violence prevention in Southern  
and East Africa

LITERATURE, POLICY AND PROGRAMME REVIEW





**CSV**  
Centre for the Study of  
Violence and Reconciliation



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## Executive summary

Peace and prosperity represent two universal objectives of nations across the world. Since the mid-2000s, a recognition of the growing representation of young people in developing countries has posed a significant dilemma to policymakers; continue to exclude youth and neglect the issues that they face, further aggravating the conditions that contribute to violence, or include youth in unpacking and addressing these conditions and contribute to greater peace and prosperity.

This review integrates recent literature, policy and programming, focused on youth socio-economic inclusion, in order to identify key programming and policy recommendations that may foster greater youth inclusion and violence prevention. Whilst the literature and policies reviewed include a focus on countries in sub-Saharan Africa more broadly, the six youth programmes included in the review focus on the Eastern and Southern African countries of Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Key themes emanating from the literature review highlight the multiplicity of factors that need to be considered when creating programmes and policies aimed at promoting youth inclusion and violence prevention. These include the precarious nature of the concept of youth, the potential exclusionary nature of prevalent youth narratives, the need for educational reforms, the need for inclusive economic growth, as well as the need for greater and more meaningful inter-sectoral collaboration.

The report highlights a strong overlap between literature and strategic objectives in national and regional youth policies. Whilst showing great promise, it highlights some of the challenges that may contribute to the gaps between policy development, implementation and outcomes. This includes challenges with policy harmonisation, interdepartmental collaboration, a lack of budgeting towards as well as evaluation of policy outcomes.

The six youth programmes included in this report highlight varied approaches to youth inclusion, often with a greater focus on economic inclusion and secondary focus on social inclusion. A focus on technical or trade skills as well as entrepreneurship appear to be common, with a focus on the latter potentially implicitly speaking to the challenges posed by lower educational outcomes, the youth bulge, low youth labour absorption rates, as well as high levels of self or familial employment in the informal sector. The section highlights the importance of participatory approaches to programme development and evaluation, the value of post-training support and mentorship, as well as holistic or whole-person approaches to youth inclusion. Identified programmatic challenges include programme sustainability, scalability, funding, political interference, as well as evaluation.

Themes identified in the literature policy and programme reviews contributed to the development of nine recommendations. A central theme underlying these recommendations includes the need for multiple stakeholders to work with youth to ensure that they play a central role in ensuring that policies and programmes are more responsive to their needs and aspirations.

## 1. Introduction

The concept of youth is a historical misnomer, with Aries' (1962) centuries of childhood study suggesting that this developmental phase only gained popularity in the early twentieth century, as a result of predominantly political, technological, and economic forces. In this century, research and policy often portrayed youth (aged between 15 and 25) as irresponsible troublemakers, vandals and a source of many societal ills (Abbink, 2005; Anyidoho, 2012; Griffin, 2001). Coincidentally, such narratives often further excluded and silenced young people from decision-making and reinforced the contextual challenges that often contributed to these societal ills (Simpson, 2018).

Whilst such narratives may have been challenged during this period, Ayele, Khan and Sumberg (2017) suggested that the World Bank's (2006) 'Development and the Next Generation' report highlighted the need to radically reconsider narratives and approaches to young people's needs. This was potentially due to policymakers being faced with the unavoidable reality of a growing 'youth bulge' amongst many developing countries, which refers to a phenomenon where the proportion of 15 to 24 years olds in a country's population increases significantly – in comparison to other age groups. Policymakers could either invest in youth, who presented an "unprecedented opportunity to accelerate growth and reduce poverty" or continue to ignore and exclude youth, which would contribute to youth remaining unemployed for long periods, draining the economy and continually representing a threat to political stability. This phenomenon has also been referred to as the 'demographic dividend' or 'African Equation', given the fact that many African countries have the youngest and fast growing percentage of young people in their populations (Losch, 2015a).

The burning issue for many Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries is the sheer magnitude of this youth bulge or youth population growth. "While SSA's population increased by 560 million people between 1970 and 2010, it will increase by 1.1 billion over the same time period between 2010 and 2050" (Losch, 2015a, p. 228). This means that many SSA countries will face a dramatic challenge in creating enough jobs to meet the high number of young job seekers entering the job market each year (Bhorat & Naidoo, 2013).



Data collected from Statistics South Africa’s nationally representative Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) provides a close estimation of the size of this challenge in South Africa. Based on QLFS sociodemographic factors, young people (aged 15-34) are twice as likely to be unemployed when compared to people aged between 35-54 (41% compared to 21% respectively). Whilst at times difficult to interpret, results also suggested that the country’s working-age population grew by close to 600,000 in 2019 but that an average of only 43% of these labour market entrants was absorbed into the labour force. An age category disaggregated trend analysis of youth absorption rates further highlighted how those aged 15-19 experienced an absorption rate of less than 5%, 20-24 years just above 20%, 25-29 years at approximately 45% and 30-34 years at 55% in 2015 (De Lannoy et al., 2018). The employment prospects that many young people face is additionally compounded by chronic or long-term unemployment rates, where close to two-thirds of young people and especially young women are likely to be without employment for more than 12 months (Statistics South Africa, 2018). Whilst recognising youth resilience and protective factors, coupled with stressors such as poverty, long-term unemployment poses a great risk to young people’s well-being. This includes more adverse effects on their mental health, including increased risk of anxiety, depression and suicidality (Losch, 2015b). These stressors have also been shown to increase young people’s risk towards substance abuse and participation in or exposure to different forms of violence. For instance, multiple studies have also highlighted how long-term unemployment and a lack of financial security can increase young women’s financial dependence on their partners and risk of experiencing gender-based violence (Gumani & Mudhovozi, 2013).

Studies have also highlighted the links between youth unemployment, experiences of inequality, deprivation or exclusion and violence. This included Cramer’s (2011) study that highlighted young gang members lived experiences of ethnic, racial and structural exclusion as factors that contributed to their participation in gangs. Furthermore, linked to the pervasiveness of the youth as troublemakers narrative, many young people who experience long-term unemployment are also at risk of experiencing real or perceived discrimination, a loss of social standing, weaker social capital and difficulty fulfilling psychosocial needs (Kieselbach, 2003).



The above figures are based on South African research

## 2. Report methodology

This report set out to achieve the following objectives:

1. **Review literature**, policies and programmes focusing on youth development, social and economic inclusion, in Southern and East Africa, as a means of gaining key programming and policy insights.
2. **Identify, review and document** lessons from recent youth socio-economic and livelihood programmes, in Southern and East Africa, which show potential in promoting youth inclusion and violence prevention.
3. **Conduct interviews** with key stakeholders to expand on key learnings as well as potential programming and policy recommendations.
4. **Share lessons and recommendations** from this regional review with various stakeholders in an effort to inform national and regional policy focusing on youth development, inclusion and violence prevention.

The first criterion utilised for this report’s literature review was that literature needed to focus on youth social and economic inclusion in Southern and East Africa or at least Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) more broadly. While the majority of literature focused on SSA more broadly, country specific programme and policy documents highlighted strong overlaps in themes across countries. Secondly, publications from the past five years were prioritised. Thirdly, the literature included in this report needed to focus on youth social and/or economic inclusion. Following these criteria, the literature included in this report included book chapters, journal articles, academic reports as well as reports from international institutions such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the World Bank.

The policy documents consulted for the policy review included a combination of regional as well as national policies focusing on youth. The most central regional policy included the **African Union’s African Youth Charter (AYC)**. National policies included national youth policies as well as policies or acts related to national youth development and coordination.

A number of selection criteria were utilised in an effort to identify youth programmes or projects suitable for inclusion in this report. These selection criteria included:

1. Programmes needed to focus on or include aspects that aimed to promote young people’s social and economic inclusion. Examples of social inclusion included programmes that aimed to build young people’s leadership skills, self-esteem, communication skills, volunteerism, active citizenship or standing within their communities. Programmes that included a focus on youth economic inclusion often focused on supply-side (skills development and training), demand-side factors (tax incentives) or the interaction between these factors (e.g. youth employment platforms, matching processes...).
2. Given the high demand for youth employment, this research prioritised large-scale programmes that have shown great scalability or reach. Large-scale projects included those that had directly reached close to or more than 10,000 young people.
3. This research prioritised programmes where it was possible to gather some level of evidence of project outcomes or key learnings.

4. Programmes or projects implemented or completed within the past ten years
5. Projects that had been funded or implemented independently or in partnership with governments, local or international funders, development agencies or non-governmental organisations
6. Whilst initial conversations had hoped for a more expansive review, funding and human resource constraints meant that this review was limited to a focus on socio-economic and livelihood programmes in Southern and East Africa.

The insights or contributions of **six subject specialists (SS)** have been integrated throughout the remainder of this report. These experts included representatives of national and regional youth bodies, academics, as well as representatives from government departments responsible for driving youth development. While three of the experts were based in South Africa, the work of one of these experts meant that she was familiar with youth issues in both Southern and East Africa. Two experts had closely followed youth issues in Kenya whereas the sixth subject expert was familiar with both Zimbabwean and Southern African youth.



The African Youth Charter is a political and legal framework, which serves the purpose of providing a strategic framework and direction for youth empowerment and development activities at continental, regional and national levels across Africa.





### 3. Integrated literature review: Key findings

This section presents themes that emerged in a review of literature related to youth social and economic inclusion in Southern and East Africa. Whilst some literature was country or region specific, a great deal of the literature focused on the greater region of sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

In an attempt to avoid repetition, the section also integrates policy and subject specialist inputs with relevant literature themes. The policies reviewed in this study including the African Youth Charter as well as the National Youth Policies of the four country case studies.

#### 3.1 Definitions of youth

The very concept of youth is greatly contested. As noted in this report's introduction, Aries' (1962) study of the history of childhood noted how the concept of youth only gain popularity or more widespread use in the early twentieth century. This argument is potentially related to Simpson's (2018) note on the exclusionary nature of the concept of youth, where young people may also be defined by what they are not – both not children or adults. Youth is noted as being a complicated and multifaceted construct entailing elements of a group of people joined by their chronological age, with more Eurocentric definitions of youth (United Nations, 2013) including people aged 15 to 24 and many Afrocentric definitions (African Union, 2006) including people up until the age of 35.

The variations in who is included in definitions of youth are likely tied to how the contextual challenges that young people face, in different countries or regions, influence their ability to meet the educational, occupational, economic and social standards or expectations associated with definitions of adulthood. These include how the legacies of colonialism, neo-liberalism and exploitation have shaped labour markets, gender expectations, socioeconomic profiles of African countries, politics, young people's educational opportunities as well as employment prospects.



Whilst all policies touch on the complex nature of the concept of youth, both South Africa and Zimbabwe's definitions aligned with the AU's definition of youth (people aged between 15 and 35) whereas Uganda and Kenya's definitions focused on youth between the ages of 18 and 30.



Specialists noted policy challenges that stemmed from narrow conceptualisations of youth. These challenges included that policies failed to recognise the high levels of youth heterogeneity or diversity. This challenge contributed to subgroups of youth being excluded or overlooked during policy discussions.

*When you look at those women, there are different subcategories and [some of those] categories never make it to the policy table." (KS)*



Furthermore, some subgroups, who may be defined as youth, may not identify or be identified as youth. This was noted for young women who were also mothers. Culturally, having children often contributed to them being viewed as women rather than youth. This contributed to their exclusion from youth policy discussions or youth programmes.

It was noted that those involved in youth policy discussions needed to recognise the concept of intersectionality or the multiple identifiers that may facilitate or hinder young people's social and economic inclusion – for example; not just age but issues of gender, sexual orientation, educational attainment, employment status, physical ability and location (rural, peri-urban or urban). Policy language would thus require more nuanced language rather than generalised references to youth.

*The issues within a specific group are very different. It would be absurd to generalise the issues [faced by youth] as you would on a national level." (KS)*

### 3.2. Youth narratives

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Various studies have noted that the manner in which youth are viewed in their societies and by policymakers greatly affects the ways in which policies and public institutions respond to young people and their needs. During the twentieth century, a popular narrative was that of young people as vandals, delinquents, as well as social, political or economic burdens. It is noted that such narratives represent a form of blaming the victim (Ryan, 1976), where the pathology or problem is located with an individual or group instead of in the broader socio-economic-political factors that often contribute to such behaviours.

Such stereotypes have often also contributed to patronising, trivialised and harsh responses to the struggles that young people have faced (Simpson, 2018). This is noted in narratives around young people as having a sense of entitlement, being impatient and not willing to put in the effort in order to get to where they want to be in their lives. Such views fail to recognise the very real challenges that young people face in their lives. These include exceptionally low youth labour absorption rates, high levels of youth unemployment, as well as high levels of young people being categorised as the working poor – where the International Labour Organization (2015) reported that up to 40% of young people in developing countries worked full-time but remained in extreme poverty (less than 2USD a day). Whilst such narratives of youth have started shifting, continued sensitivity to the issue is required.

### 3.3. Youth and inequalities

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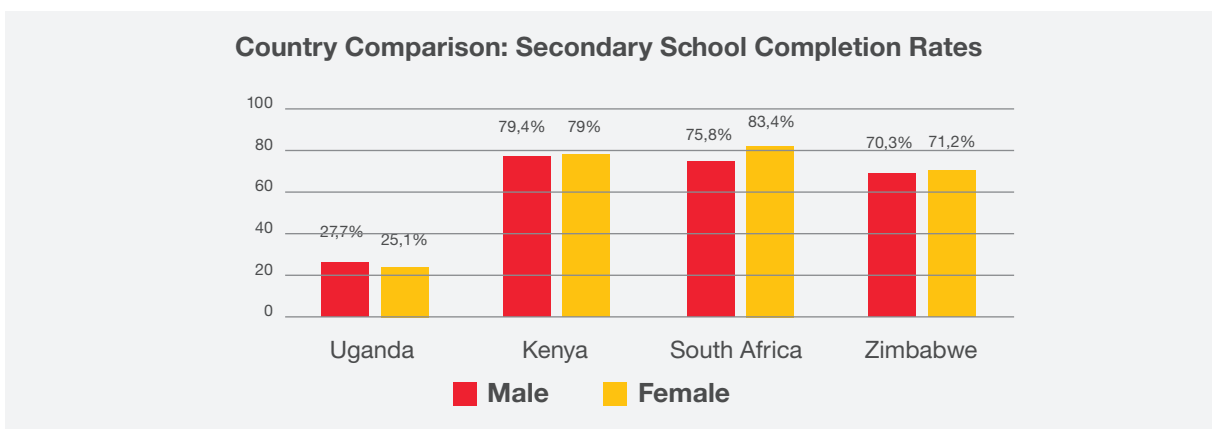
The significance of sub-Saharan Africa's history is again noted in arguments around the often inescapable nature of cycles of poverty as well as gender and spatial inequalities that have affected multiple generations. This includes the continued reality of how being born poor hampers young people's upward mobility or chances of moving out of poverty (Simpson, 2018). Such realities were not mere coincidences but rather constructed by colonial economic needs, political and structural violence. This included mass land dispossession – which moved Africans from self-sufficient landowners or cultivators to dependent labourers, reforms to education systems – primarily to meet white economic or political interests, as well as racially segregated development – which further contributed to deprivation and states of economic dependence.

Such legacies are likely noted across Africa, though vast amounts of literature in South Africa have highlighted how these legacies continue to effect young South Africans. This includes many black South Africans receiving poorer quality education compared to other racial groups, not being able to afford further education and due to the country’s history of segregated development, often not being able to afford the transport fees associated with looking for employment or travelling to historically white, major business districts.

Related to gender, various studies have highlighted how young African women generally have worse prospects in terms of educational outcomes, employment, income and other forms of inclusion – e.g. socio and political inclusion (De Lannoy et al., 2018; Graham, De Lannoy, et al., 2019; Kilimani, 2017; Simpson, 2018). While such dynamics are often attributed to gender role expectations (such as childrearing or domestic responsibilities) or discrimination experienced in the labour market, De Lannoy et al.’s (2018) systematic review of factors that drive youth unemployment in South Africa suggested that this dynamic is far more complicated. It is likely that the legacy of Africa’s economic development (which favoured the primary sector, mineral extraction and heavy manual labour), poorer quality education systems, multiple gender role expectations, interpersonal power dynamics as well as various forms of violence in workspaces (e.g. sexual harassment, threats and intimidation) continue to exclude women.

### 3.4. Education and skills development

A prominent theme across SSA literature related to challenges experienced in foundational through to secondary education as well as the apparent gap between secondary or even tertiary educational outcomes and the skills required in the labour market (De Lannoy et al., 2018; Kilimani, 2017; Simpson, 2018; World Bank, 2016b). An issue related to the responsiveness or links between education and the labour market includes secondary school completion rates. A comparison across the four country case studies (see graph 1 below) highlighted particularly low levels of secondary school completion for young Ugandans, with young men having slightly higher completion rates.



An analysis of secondary school completion rates in South Africa highlighted how young men, living in rural areas, had the lowest levels of literacy as well as the lowest odds of completing secondary school (Statistics South Africa, 2015). Whilst there are instances of young men having lower levels of secondary school completion, country level statistics often highlight how young women often experience higher levels of unemployment.

The influence of colonialism on African education systems and economies should not be overlooked. Many African countries have faced great challenges in reforming their education systems from those created to serve colonial interests. This has included having to contest with inadequate numbers and distributions of schools, poor school infrastructure, decentralised and segregated education systems, as well as outdated curricula. These challenges as well as associated socioeconomic challenges have contributed to lower levels of registered learners, lower levels of numeracy and literacy, relatively high levels of teacher absenteeism, lower levels of school completion, as well as poor educational outcomes.



During a period (1960s-1980s) where many African countries were attempting to reform basic through to tertiary education systems, vast improvements in transport and communication meant that colonialists and less exploited countries faced fewer obstacles in planning and adjusting their education systems, businesses and labour markets to a more competitive, global economy. Many countries have still not adequately responded to the threats and opportunities posed by globalisation, where many education systems continue to adopt traditional approaches of developing and certifying competence in school subjects related to different fields of work, rather than developing skillsets more closely related to current and future labour markets. This means that many young people complete their secondary studies without many of the skills in the sectors and fields of the economy that are growing (e.g. financial and business services, transport and communications as well as food processing).

In addition, whilst diploma level, trade qualifications have been in demand and training has been available via colleges (further, technical or vocational training centres), literature has highlighted lower than expected levels of enrolment at such colleges. This has likely been due to the stigma associated with such colleges, where a university degree is viewed as the gold standard and greater source of prestige (De Lannoy et al., 2018; Kilimani, 2017; Ngcaweni et al., 2014). However, universities are also not without their challenges, with high levels of student dropout attributed to factors such as financial difficulties as well as the alienating institutional culture of some universities.



Many policies recognised the multiple reforms that need to take place from early childhood development through to tertiary education. These include improving education infrastructure, access to quality education, opportunities for further training for educators, improved career guidance, as well as gradual reforms in curricula – as a means of ensuring that educational content and outcomes are more aligned with the skills required in current and future labour markets (thereby addressing the issues of a perceived lack of skills and the skills mismatch).

At the tertiary level, proposed reforms have included attempting to address stereotypes around vocational or further education and training qualifications, developing centralised national or regional

(e.g. AU) qualifications authorities, bridging programmes that address potential educational gaps between secondary and tertiary studies as well as interventions that address challenges around student adjustment and toxic institutional cultures.

Policies also recognised the need for a diversification of skills as a means of filling existing job opportunities as well as a means of potentially creating more jobs. The development and expansion of the private sector through greater skills development and financial support were also recognised as means of creating job opportunities in Uganda and Kenya.

### 3.5. Entrepreneurship and self-employment

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Perhaps recognising that the public and private sectors could not create enough jobs, young people and older citizens alike have been encouraged to create their own jobs and also expand their enterprises to create jobs. Whilst many governments have created policies and initiatives to create jobs, the drive for self-employment is perhaps a political scapegoat or another form of blaming the victim. The dominance of the entrepreneurship and self-employment discourse has, to some extent, contributed to narratives of young people as lazy, dependent or unimaginative when they are not able to create their own employment (Ayele et al., 2017).

Whilst many jobs can be created through entrepreneurship, it has been highlighted as a difficult path. Worldwide, these include challenges in accessing capital or credit, access to markets, establishing links within existing value chains, finding mentors, potential disconnects between young people’s imagined future careers, as well as difficulties in creating an entrepreneurial culture (Kilimani, 2017). It has also been noted that perhaps too many entrepreneurial programmes have taken an individualistic approach to economic advancement, thereby missing the opportunity to address broader social or communal norms which may restrict young entrepreneurs and especially young women (Simpson, 2018). Key findings for entrepreneurship programmes will be unpacked in the discussion focusing on the Northern Uganda Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (NUYEP) – section 5.

### 3.6. Rural versus urban youth

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Conversations around employment in the formal or informal sector need to consider intersectionality or the various categorisations within the broader category of youth. In addition to race, age, and gender, socio-economic and livelihood programmes and especially policy-makers need to consider spatial aspects and the vastly different experiences of youth in rural and urban areas.

Post-colonialism, many countries in SSA experienced rapid increases in rural-urban migration or urbanisation. For instance, levels of urbanisation were estimated at just 15% in the late 1950s, reaching 37% in 2000 and expected to reach 50% by 2015 (United Nations: Population Division, 2002). This pattern of migration was also referred to as the ‘bright light syndrome’, where people across the world expected greater employment prospect and standards of living in cities or urban areas. However, this

rate of urbanisation has slowed down since the later 2000s, potentially linked to a recognition of the realities of more limited, lower paid and informal employment arrangements in urban areas (Losch, 2015b).

Despite this history of urbanisation, a large percentage of African economies still depend on primary sector activities such as agriculture or mining. Many populations are still predominantly rural, with up to 70% of the workforce engaging in agriculture and the informal sector (Kilimani, 2017).



With this in mind, it is important to consider current as well as future approaches to socio and economic development. Since the 1960s, many governments and policymakers have favoured the urbanised, industrial approach to development, despite the high percentage of rural populations and relatively neglected rural economies, which still hold vast potential for development or refinement (Losch, 2015b). It is argued that rural youth have continued to be neglected by policymakers, which has contributed to their having to move to urban areas, where prospects of decent employment have become more elusive.

### 3.7. Jobless growth

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Okun's law or the neoliberal idea of a strong relationship between economic growth and job creation has been expounded by international lenders (such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank) and internalised by African leaders over multiple decades. Whilst there are examples of this relationship, literature focusing on youth has highlighted the growing concern of jobless growth – a case where there is an increase in a country's economic growth (GDP) but no increase or an actual decrease in the employment rate.

Losch (2015b) aptly argued that it is the quality or nature of economic growth that is important and not just the extent of this growth. This is illustrated by the fact that while average income per capita in Sub-Saharan African countries increased by 30% and while 6 of the 10 fastest growing economies were in the region, these improvements have not necessarily resulted in sustained employment or reductions in poverty. This is for the reason that the sectors of an economy that may grow or contribute more to a country's economy may not be labour intense or pay decent wages. This can include growth in sectors such as finance and business services, manufacturing or telecommunications, where higher levels of mechanisation, technology or required skillsets contribute to more economically valuable products but may require more skilled, smaller workforces. In these instances, while an economy may grow by a few percent, this growth may not create the large number of jobs required to reduce high unemployment rates. Thus, literature highlights the need for growth in more labour-intensive sectors of the economy rather than pure or broader economic growth.

### 3.8. Formal sector employment

Linked to the need to focus on the quality of economic growth, multiple authors have noted the relatively low labour absorption rates of the private and public sectors. These sectors, which have traditionally had high absorption rates, have simply not been able to absorb the high number of particularly young job seekers (De Lannoy et al., 2018; Kilimani, 2017; Ngcaweni et al., 2014; World Bank, 2016b).

In developing countries, up to half of waged employees are employed in the public sector (Kilimani, 2017). While public servants are vital in administering or delivering public services, governments also face a great challenge in balancing spending on public servant wage bills, ensuring the productivity of public servants, as well as spending on different areas of development (e.g. health, education, infrastructure, social services). Many developing countries have been criticized for having bloated, underperforming public sectors, with large percentages of state funds going towards public servant wages. This is particularly noted in East and Southern African countries where public servant wage bills vary between 30% and 90% of GDP (e.g. Zimbabwe, 2018; Sguazzin & Marawanyika, 2019). Therefore, while the public sector may employ a large percentage of the labour force, its labour absorption rate is largely affected by growth in GDP or gross national income.



In developing countries,  
up to  
**1/2**  
of waged employees  
are employed in the  
public sector

These ties to income and budget are also highlighted in social support or employment initiatives such as public employment programmes (PEPs). Such programmes have been piloted or have become policy cornerstones across Africa, with pilot projects including the Kazi Kwa Vijana Programme in Kenya and Employment Intensive Investments in Mozambique through to established programmes, such as the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) in Ethiopia as well as the Expanded Public Works (EPWP) and Community Work Programmes (CWP) in South Africa. These programmes recognise the often structural nature of under and unemployment, the potential for skills development or transfers, as well as the need to buffer the effects of absolute poverty.

CSVR's research has highlighted how the largescale nature of PEPs offers potential for both social and economic development. Examples of such development have included increased social capital, social cohesion, active citizenship, violence prevention and the development of micro-enterprises such as cooperatives (Langa et al., 2016; Rebello, 2019). The South African government's recognition of the value of PEPs was recently reaffirmed in the country's National Youth Policy (2020-2030), where it aims to increase youth participation in the EPWP to 50%.\

Whilst PEPs have reached millions of people across Africa and had many other benefits, questions have also been raised in relation to their appeal to urban youth. Literature has suggested that the low wages of PEPs may represent a barrier to youth involvement, whereas some PEPs may not represent enough of a clear path between inclusion in such programmes, links to the labour market and employability (De Lannoy et al., 2018). Although skills development and transfers have been a part of many PEPs, the recognition of these skills in the formal sector is low. Furthermore, using the EPWP and CWP as examples, tensions between reach (number of beneficiaries) and skills development have previously resulted in cuts to the amount of resources allocated to skills development. Issues of nepotism and corruption have also hampered the progress of some PEPs (Comrie, 2020; Kenya National Assembly Official Record (Hansard), 2010). These challenges have contributed to recommendations such as the need to redesign PEPs in order to foster greater youth participation and inclusion. Further research around this recommendation represents an important aspect of this project.

Turning to the private sector, whilst it appears that the sector is creating few jobs, some have suggested that not enough is known about the true absorption capacity of the sector or barriers to increased absorption (De Lannoy et al., 2018; Graham, Patel, et al., 2019; World Bank, 2018). Whilst slow economic growth and decreased demand may be identified as factors that decrease demand for labour, Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator has identified both supply and demand side factors that contribute to challenges in increasing the absorption of young job seekers. A more detailed discussion of these factors is discussed in section 5.

### **3.9. The informal sector**

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With the formal sector not producing enough jobs to meet the high demand for employment, greater numbers of young people have had to rely on the informal sector as a means of employment or income. Linked to its definition as the part of the economy that is neither taxed nor monitored by government, this sector has generally been neglected by policy makers. This neglect has contributed to a difficulty in recognising the true numbers, opportunities and risks associated with the sector (Losch, 2015b).





Young people who live in a household wherein a relative is employed, have a greater chance of finding employment opportunities

The sector has also been called the ‘popular economy’ given estimates of between 75 to 95% of SSA workers – excluding South Africa at 50% – being involved in this sector (Jutting & de Laiglesia, 2009). Forms of business in this sector include self-employment or family-run microenterprises with agricultural produce being the most common form of goods in the broader SSA region.



Whilst this sector of the economy has proven to be resilient to economic shocks, it is also a high-risk environment, with informal, non-contractual, unregistered work arrangements and irregular income. Many young women engaged in this sector are also exposed to different forms of violence such as harassment, intimidation or stock theft, from both citizens and law enforcement officials (Simpson, 2018).

Another substantial role and type of work that has generally not received recognition or financial compensation has included care work – which includes childcare, care for elderly or sickly family or community members. While care work is at the heart of all economies, where carers nurture and sustain current and future labourers, the vast majority of this work remains unpaid. A recent ILO (2018) report, entitled *Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work*, highlighted a continued neglect of this work, despite the great opportunities that it presents in terms of fostering greater gender equality, reducing financial dependence and gender-based violence.

### **3.10. Networks and social capital**

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In considering youth socio-economic inclusion, research has forced stakeholders to consider the different ways that many young people search for employment and how many employers search for employees. It has been noted that many young people in SSA are still heavily dependent on their social networks to find employment opportunities (De Lannoy et al., 2018; Kilimani, 2017; Levinsohn et al., 2014). This reliance on social networks may partly be due to a lack of knowledge, access to or inefficiencies in other job seeking platforms. Barriers to potential online portals may include limited access to the internet, high data costs or difficulties in navigating online application processes. Given this reliance on social networks, research has also suggested that young people who live in a household wherein a relative is employed, have a greater chance of finding employment opportunities (Levinsohn et al., 2014).

At the same time, research has also highlighted that while employers may utilise internal human resources departments or recruitment agencies, employers often rely on internal employee social networks and references when searching for potential employees (De Lannoy et al., 2018). Together, this research highlights that multiple gaps exist in terms of how job seekers and employees find or connect with each other. These gaps foreground the importance of technology to strengthen these connections, the importance of intermediary services who assist in matching and connecting young jobseekers and employers, as well as means of building young people's social economies – social capital.

### **3.11. The effects of politics on youth programming and policies**

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Various studies have highlighted that efforts to address youth socio-economic inclusion are also greatly affected by the political context (Ayele et al., 2017; De Lannoy et al., 2018; World Bank, 2016a). In many SSA countries, political freedoms are more restricted and those conducting research or implementing youth programmes either require permits to conduct research or often experience strong oversight from government officials – watching for any signs that may threaten the status quo. In other instances, governments may have adversarial relationships with researchers or civil society, which also greatly affects buy-in or ownership of promising research or programmes.

In addition, it is held that in many developing countries, issues faced by youth are more likely to be addressed either when these issues pose a risk to those in power or when addressing these issues can further entrench political power. This was noted in what Simpson (2018) referred to as the 'policy panic' that ensued following the World Bank's report on the challenges and opportunities presented by the youth bulge. It was also noted in Kenya where many youth projects, such as the Kazi Kwa Vijana youth programme, were launched shortly after youth-led 2007 post-election violence.

### 3.12. The need for greater inter-departmental and inter-sectoral collaboration

The topic of greater youth social and economic inclusion is one that affects and requires the inputs of young people themselves, multiple government departments, the private sector, local to national civil society, and other stakeholders. However, studies have highlighted how stakeholders continue to work in silos, often unaware of each other’s efforts. This siloed approach often contributes to reduced impact, as resources are spread more thinly and directed to multiple, at times, diverging outcomes.



When efforts are taken to work in a collaborative manner, the size of the task or issue at hand, as well as difficulty in clearly defining roles, responsibilities and means of accountability contributes to inefficiencies. This has been noted in the case of South Africa where the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) was formed and mandated to mainstream and integrate youth development across government departments and sectors. However, a lack of capacity and authority have greatly undermined the NYDA’s efforts to achieve this mandate (De Lannoy et al., 2018).



An interviewee noted that another reason for difficulties with collaboration related to departmental performance being evaluated or tied to their mandates rather than the achievement of key national development strategies or policies. Furthermore, measures of departmental performance or success often fostered interdepartmental competition rather than collaboration.

*When a young person is placed [in a learnership or employment, the question is who [which department] gets to credit that? Who does the [achievement] accrue to? So the key performance indicators and measurements of success do not necessarily facilitate collaboration, they facilitate competition (LG).*

However, it was also noted that the South African presidency had recognised this and other barriers to policy implementation and had set up interdepartmental programmes that aim to foster greater collaboration towards objectives such as youth employment.

*The reality is that the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) is doing one thing, the Department of Employment and Labour (DoL) is doing something... the NYDA is doing another... but no one is talking to each other about how these things connect... From what I understand, there does seem to be a strong focus on this integration by the presidency. There is now the Education for Employment programme where the DHET and the DoL are working together (LG).*

There is still a need to include stakeholders, such as the private sector, more meaningfully. An interviewee noted that in the process of developing South Africa’s most recent NYP, a representative from the private sector suggested that it may continue to be viewed as a cash or job-cow that can or should simply create employment opportunities. There was likely a meaningful conversation around how economic policies and the economic environment may have hampered the sector’s ability to create these opportunities.

*One of the key contributions [from the private sector representative], which has been echoed before, is that the private sector wants to be at the table when decisions are made. We should not only see them as a piggy bank that we only go to when [we need something]. They should be part of the debate around youth development... we need to see them as a partner for development... we do know that [the sector] is under a lot of pressure with [the economic effects of] COVID-19 (EK).*

### 3.13. The consequences of youth exclusion

Whilst there are vast consequences of youth exclusion, aligned with the focus of this project, a significant concern is how youth social and economic exclusion affects young people’s risk of being perpetrators or victims of violence. While recognising that the links between youth exclusion and violence are multifaceted and indirect, the link is strong enough to warrant attention. This has been noted in several cases – with the destabilising nature of economic exclusion first being noted by Choucri (1974).



For instance, Simpson (2018) noted that while the vast majority of young people are not involved in violence, the multiple risk factors that they experience contribute to situations where a large percentage of those involved in armed conflict are young people. Another involves how the social and economic exclusion faced by young Zimbabweans has been historically exploited, by the ruling ZANU-PF party, as a means of facilitating young men’s involvement in instigating political violence (Mhike, 2017). The gendered links between young women’s economic exclusion and violence should also be noted, where multiple barriers to women’s financial or economic inclusion greatly increase their risk of experiencing gender-based violence (Harrington Conner, 2014).

Furthermore, youth exclusion can also represent a strong catalyst for social change, where youth noted as being at the forefront of the Arab Spring (United States Institute of Peace, 2011). Young people are also victims of violence when social and economic exclusion are viewed as forms of violence in themselves. Both forms of exclusion limit young people’s potential or ability to reach their full potential. According to the frustration-aggression hypothesis (Dollard et al., 1939), these barriers also influence young people’s mental health or well-being, potentially contributing to an increased sense of frustration or aggression, which may be directed inward or externally. Additionally, the governments of countries with higher levels of youth representation (youth bulge), are also more likely to lack the means to address young people’s grievances and subsequently, respond with repressive actions (Nordås & Davenport, 2013).

## 4. Integrated policy review

A review of regional and national policies (Uganda, Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe) highlighted strong overlaps in terms of strategic areas for youth social and economic inclusion or development more broadly. It suggests that national youth policies were strongly effected by post-colonialism as well as international and regional policies such as the United Nations' World Programme of Action for Youth as well as the African Union's African Youth Charter (AYC). These guidelines and policies adopted a right's-based approach to youth development, where rights such as the freedoms of expression, movement and association, non-discrimination, a quality education, employment and public participation are foregrounded. The reviewed national youth policies also illustrated strong links to the themes in literature identified in this document.

This section highlights overlaps in regional and national youth policies. Policies included in this review include the AYC, Uganda's National Youth Policy of 2016, Kenya's National Youth Policy of 2006 as well as associated strategic plan (2007-2012), South Africa's draft National Youth Policy (2020-2030), as well as Zimbabwe's Revised National Youth Policy (NYP) of 2013.

### 4.1. Youth participation:

All policies recognised how youth need to be more involved in decisions that affect the different areas of their lives. However, it appears that policies and interviewees diverged in terms of their understandings of and remedies to this lack of youth inclusion in policy formation.

Interviewees agreed that the process of youth policy formation is still a largely elitist, top-down process. This was, in part, shaped by the narratives and attitudes that policy-makers held of young people; narratives that positioned young people as ignorant or naïve and older people as knowing what is best. Many interviewees believed that such narratives contributed to superficial efforts to include youth or merely including youth just to tick an item of a checklist. Visions of young people as fickle, playful and irresponsible likely also contributed to youth issues being patronised and remedied through sports, arts and cultural activities that would simply help them have fun and keep them occupied.

*"One of the big issues [in developing policies for youth] is that of tokenisation. Young people are seen as many but also as problematic people that you tokenise, in terms of policy. For example, I was a part of a team that was involved in crafting [a government developmental/ vision framework]... we were dividing the roles and one gentleman said, "You look like the youngest here so why don't you do the chapters on youth and women?" Then of course you give all these ideas based on the research you have done and then as he was reading the draft he said, "Listen here young lady. You know these young people; you just need to give them something small to keep them busy and to keep them silent. Don't bring in those affirmative action issues that women like pushing for." (KS)*

Interviewees also noted that when youth are included, it is important to ask which youth were included. The policy formation space is viewed as elitist and many young people who are included have greater

levels of social, political and economic capital than young people to which youth policies should speak.

*There is often what is called ‘youth inclusion’ but my sense of it is that it does not include ‘real’ youth because some youth have positioned themselves as gatekeepers... These are young people who are privileged in one way or another (KS).*

Policies, such as Zimbabwe’s Revised NYP, recommended the need to include civic education in school curricula, where youth can be educated about their civic rights and responsibilities. Such recommendations suggest that young people are unaware of key policies that affect their lives or that they have the opportunity to contribute to the development or refinement of such policies. While this may hold true, as highlighted by different authors (Steyn, 2015; Von Holdt et al., 2011), there is also the possibility that a lack of youth participation may also be the result of a lack of local youth networking or a breakdown of trust in public processes.

*There is this disconnect with government. This becomes further entrenched when young people do access government services and they do not get the kind of service [that they expect] or are let down. So they have this low level of trust with government services [or processes] (LG).*

An interviewee highlighted that a potential consequence of a lack of youth involvement in policy formation included a lack of buy-in for such policies as well as a lack of concern around the implementation and outcomes thereof. A lack of youth inclusion is thereby viewed as contributing to broader issues with policy implementation and accountability. .

*You have individuals who do not identify as youth who inform the creation of these policies and then, on the ground, there is this expectation that young people should take up these policies and run with them but the voices of young people are not really included (KM).*

Policies and interviewees agreed that greater youth inclusion is required at all levels of the policy formation process – from the conceptualisation of policies through to the evaluation thereof. An interviewee, who was also a public official, recognised this need and stated that a lack of budget and human resources limited youth inclusion, particularly in-person meetings on provincial consultations with youth. The interviewee highlighted an impressive number of additional strategies that the department followed to maximise youth participation. This included working with civil society and other stakeholders to create awareness and gather inputs on the draft NYP as well as generating discussions around youth issues and the policy via community radio stations, newspapers and various social media platforms.

Two interviewees also highlighted potential signs of improvement in terms of youth inclusion in policy or decision-making. This included less pathologising narratives in Kenya’s most recent NYP as well as greater youth representation in political positions (local level as well as parliament).

## 4.2. Inclusivity and non-discrimination:

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The policies highlighted the need to ensure that people from all different backgrounds have equal access to opportunities for employment, physical, psychological and other services. Gender featured strongly in these policies, where all recognised that young women continue to be overrepresented in statistics such as unemployment, school dropout or discontinuation, experiences of violence and so forth. These policies also recognise the need for gender equity, where a greater number of women benefit from youth initiatives, as a means of rectifying such imbalances.

## 4.3. Information and communication technology

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ICT represents a theme that relates strongly to the third and fourth industrial revolutions. As global labour markets become more digitalised and require greater technological competence, youth policies stress the need for education reforms that provide learners with greater access to computers, online learning platforms and information about opportunities that flow from developing ICT skills. Furthermore, given that increasing numbers of youth are using digital platforms, great potential rests in improving young people's access to career and other information in these spaces as well as finding more effective means of communicating with youth. However, as noted by O'Donnell and Sweetman (2018, p. 217), "technology mirrors the societies that create it, and access to (and effective use of) technologies is affected by intersecting spectrums of exclusion including gender, ethnicity, age, social class, geography, and disability". Great efforts should be taken by stakeholders to ensure that policies and programmes, aimed at advancing ICT opportunities, recognise these barriers to ICT opportunities and inclusion.

## 4.4. Sustainable livelihoods and employment creation

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While all policies stressed the need to allocate greater resources to youth programmes, then Kenyan NYP's emphasis on reviewing, revising and partnering on youth(-led) programmes, represented an important learning for all countries included in this review. Employment creation is viewed as requiring multi-sectoral collaboration (multiple government departments, the private sector as well as civil society), with efforts to increase internship and volunteer opportunities being strongly emphasized across policies.

Although public employment programmes (PEPs) have been run in both Kenya and South Africa, the South African NYP (2020-2030) places great emphasis on the need to increase youth representation and skills development through such programmes. An interviewee highlighted how South Africa's PEPs represented a great opportunity to foster greater youth inclusion at scale and that these government initiatives were perhaps best placed to reach the high and growing number of youth in South Africa and other developing countries. However, the interviewee also noted how these PEPs have untapped potential and represent missed opportunities, as they struggle to assist young people with exit strategies and career pathing.

#### 4.5. Departmental designation and responsibility for policy implementation

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Two of the greatest shortcomings of regional and national policies, identified through this review, included a lack of policy implementation and policy review through evaluation. A number of interviewees stated that a lack of designated departmental authority or responsibility for such policy implementation and coordination often perpetuated the issue. The case of Kenya highlighted how there may also be incidents where such responsibility is designated to a government department but that cabinet reshuffles, the reallocation of responsibilities or dissolution of government departments can extinguish such efforts. Interviewees also highlighted that the NYDA is mandated to coordinate the implementation of the NYP but that its second mandate (youth programming) and lack of capacity greatly diminished its efforts to do so.

*If you juxtapose that role [youth programming] with the role of coordinating government, then you realise that it is a huge trade-off. Currently, the NYDA does not have enough resources to do both of those roles (EK).*

#### 4.6. Integrating policy documents and implementation plans

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A second challenge related to policy implementation related to the apparent gap between established policy documents and the formation of policy implementation or action plans with clear targets, budget allocations, indicators and means of verification. This was most noticeable in the case of Uganda, where its NYP was developed in 2001 but was never implemented, likely due to the lack of an action plan and other factors such as budget. Kenya appeared to move closer to this objective of developing both a NYP as well as action plan, though it proved difficult to find an evaluation of policy outcomes. An interviewee based in Kenya stated that what looked like a NYP implementation plan was never utilised.

#### 4.7. Policy harmonisation

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Multiple interviewees stated that a lack of policy harmonisation contributed to difficulties with policy implementation. In some instances, NYPs struggle to recognise or reference existing policies that spoke to the same youth concerns or objectives. This, in turn, contributed to policy and departmental mandate confusion as well as difficulties with interdepartmental collaboration.

*The issue of policy harmonisation is quite important. The [recent] NYP mentions the challenge of policy duplication or sometimes policy conflict, where one policy advocates for one thing and another for the exact opposite (EK).*

*There are several policy weaknesses. One is that they do not speak to each other. There are different laws or policies that conflict with each here in Zimbabwe. This contributes to a difficulty with implementation (MG).*



Interviewees who discussed this issue agreed that adopting a more holistic view of youth could assist with policy alignment or recognising how current policies may fit together, as well as how different departments may need to work together, to meet young people’s needs.

#### 4.8. Data, monitoring and evaluation

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While representing a significant challenge for all countries included in this review, policy development in Uganda highlighted the need to generate more youth-focused data that could inform priorities for youth development. Kenya’s NYP strategic plan (2007-2012) highlights examples of where the importance of monitoring and evaluating policy outputs and outcomes has been explicitly recognised and budgeted. Both literature and interviewees cited a lack of financial and technical capacity as challenges to more rigorous data collection, monitoring and evaluation (United Nations: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2007). However, when countries have been spending billions on youth development, it should be a priority to know where funding was allocated and what resulted from these financial, human and other resource inputs.

*Countries need to stop just paying lip service to monitoring and evaluation or impact assessment... I am not sure how many countries actually invest in widespread research on the attainment of youth outcomes... You do want to do impact assessments but the budget is just not available (EK).*

#### 4.9. Budgeting for youth policy implementation

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Multiple interviewees recognised a lack of budgeting as a major barrier to policy implementation and the achievement of policy outcomes. This lack of budgeting was attributed to factors such as an overall lack of budget or government spending power, with the vast majority of departmental budgets being allocated to staffing or wages – links to political patronage, as well as a lack of political will.

*If you look at the money that is allocated to for the implementation of Zimbabwe’s NYP, most of or 95% of it will be for paying wages in the Ministry of Youth (MG).*

## 5. Youth programmes

This section provides an overview of six youth programmes, two from East and Southern Africa respectively, which have focused on elements of socio-economic youth inclusion. Background information for each of the countries included in this review is provided as a means of better understanding the contextual factors that the programmes may have set out to address. The description of each programme includes project title, details of when the project was first implemented, project duration, beneficiary or target group information, project budget, key aspects of the project, expected outputs or outcomes, evaluation as well as project insights.

Youth Development Programme (YDP, Uganda)	Northern Uganda Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (NUYEP)	Kenya Youth Empowerment Project (KYEP)	Employment Tax Incentive (ETI, South Africa)	Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (South Africa)	Zimbabwe Youth Empowerment Programme (ZYEP)
<b>LOCATION</b>					
Northern Uganda	Northern Uganda	Kenya	South Africa	South Africa, with a growing regional footprint	Zimbabwe
<b>IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD</b>					
2013 - 2016	2013 - 2016	2010 - 2016	2014 - current	2011 - current	2015 - 2017
<b>IMPLEMENTERS</b>					
Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO)	Youth Business International and Enterprise Uganda	Kenyan government, Kenyan Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)	South African government, South African businesses	Harambee	International Youth Foundation (IYF), Zimbabwean Development Credit Authority (DCA), as well as project donors
<b>FUNDING SOURCES</b>					
British Department for International Development (DFID) grant	British Department for International Development (DFID) grant	World Bank loan	South African government (South African Revenue Services)	Private sector (youth placements), international donors, South African government departments	USAID, DFID and Embassy of Sweden (SIDA) grants
<b>BUDGET</b>					
7,5 million GBP	Unknown	Initial 60 million USD; 17 million USD dispersed	6 billion ZAR between 2014 and 2016	Unknown	8 million GBP

KEY ASPECTS	
<b>Youth Development Programme (YDP, Uganda)</b>	<p>The YPD provided support to 7 gateway (youth) centres as well as 29 vocational training institutes. The programme included two broad content areas: economic and citizenship training. The economic strand included interventions such as literacy, numeracy, vocational skills training, enterprise and soft employability skills training, as well as post-training support (e.g. apprenticeships, seed funding, job search support, mentoring). Citizenship training focused on psycho-social support; appropriate life skills (e.g. reproductive health, conflict resolution, hygiene, nutrition); self-empowerment and personal agency sessions, engagement activities (youth-to-youth) and bridging activities (youth-to-community).</p> <p>Both programme strands were delivered through six-month training courses at partner VTIs, followed by six months of post-training support. Long-term capacity building of VTI colleges was also included in the programme as a means of ensuring institutional sustainability. Capacity building of these institutions focused on financial management, curriculum quality and market relevance, delivery of social development services, and governance amongst other aspects.</p>
<b>Northern Uganda Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (NUYEP)</b>	<p>NUYEP was largely different to NYP in terms of its target group. The programme aimed to train existing, promising entrepreneurs in establishing and running an enterprise, with the hope of transforming unemployed and under-employed youth and their household members into business owners.</p> <p>As the programme aimed to work with existing entrepreneurs, beneficiaries were required to pay 50,000 UGX (R240, 14USD) to join the first training. The entrepreneurship training and follow-up activities catered for up to 800 participants at a time, in a purpose built marquee over five days, with various forms of follow up support available thereafter.</p> <p>Project activities included capacity building, market assessments, sensitisation and outreach campaigns, Business &amp; Enterprise Start-up Tool (BEST) training, follow-up clinics, other specialised trainings, business counselling and mentoring. These were followed by a significant evaluation and learning component.</p>
<b>Kenya Youth Empowerment Project (KYEP)</b>	<p>The KYEP consisted of three components. The first component was that of the largescale Kwazi Kwa Vijana (KKV) public employment programme, which was first implemented in 2005. The objective of this first component was to reduce the vulnerability of unemployed male and female youth by expanding and enhancing the effectiveness of KKV. This was to be achieved by (i) creating employment opportunities for youth in labour-intensive and social service projects, (ii) testing the innovativeness of sub-projects and mainstreaming viable ones in to the KVV, (iii) developing and implementing a monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E) framework as well as Management Information System (MIS); and (iv) improving the management and coordination capacity of the Office of the Prime Minister. Just over 70% or 43 million USD of the initial project budget was allocated this this component.</p> <p>The second component of KYP involved private sector training and internships. The main objective of this component was to improve youth employability by providing youth with work experience and skills through the creation of internships and relevant training in the formal and informal sectors (with priority given to the five growth sectors defined by Vision 2030, the Government’s development strategy). Training consisted of three main phases: (i) Life Skills Training aimed at strengthening non-cognitive skills; (ii) Core Business Skills Training; and (iii) Sector-Specific Skills Training to promote specific technical skills. After the training, youth were provided with 12 weeks of work experience in the formal and informal sectors.</p>
<b>Employment Tax Incentive (ETI, South Africa)</b>	<p>The ETI represented the South African government’s attempt to address employer concerns about estimating the return on investment (productivity) of young people who have little to no formal work experience. A youth employee tax incentive aimed to offset the costs and risks of employing youth (aged between 18 and 29) by allowing registered private sector and non-governmental employers to withhold or not pay the Pay as You Earn (PAYE) tax that all registered companies are liable to pay for their employees. For example, if an employer hired and paid a young employee R2500 a month (150 USD), the employer would be able to withhold up to R1000 of PAYE monthly contributions for this employee – for the first year of employment. This represents up to a 40% of the employee’s wage being covered by the ETI</p>
<b>Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (South Africa)</b>	<p>Harambee is an example of a comprehensive programme, which focuses on better understanding and supporting the supply side (young jobseekers), demand side (formal and informal sectors), as well as the interactions between these two spheres.</p>

KEY ASPECTS	
<b>Zimbabwe Youth Empowerment Programme (ZYEP)</b>	ZYEP included five areas of focus or components. The first component included <b>partner capacity building and gender mainstreaming</b> . This component aimed to strengthen the International Youth Foundation's (IYF) local partners' capacity to design and implement youth programs (in turn aimed at making young Zimbabweans more employable and more capable of running small businesses). This included promoting economic opportunities for women, including gender in strategic planning, resource decision-making, programming and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. The second component of <b>enterprise start-up and growth</b> aimed at self-employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for young women and men by providing them with relevant entrepreneurship and business development skills as well as mentorship and networking opportunities. The third component of <b>financial inclusion</b> aimed to increase young women and men's access to financial services through financial literacy training, promoting a savings culture, and increased access to finance. The fourth component of <b>access to formal sector employment</b> aimed to develop and expand on private sector partnerships with large and medium sized businesses in order to access internships and long-term employment opportunities for young Zimbabweans in key growth sectors. The final component was that of the <b>Development Credit Authority</b> . The DCA facility is a loan portfolio guarantee backed by the US Treasury, which will pay out against a portion (50%) of the loan defaults a commercial bank experiences under the scheme. In the Zimbabwean context, the DCA facility works with banks that use their own funds to lend to Zimbabwean businesses (operating in agribusiness, SMEs and women-and-youth-owned enterprise sectors) on the back of the DCA guarantee.
BENEFICIARIES	
<b>Youth Development Programme (YDP, Uganda)</b>	Linked to the levels of inequality experienced by youth in Northern Uganda, the programme aimed to include 15,400 marginalised and disadvantaged youth with little to no education.
<b>Northern Uganda Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (NUYEP)</b>	The programme aimed to reach 13,500 beneficiaries. At least 80% of the participants (10,800) were to be youth (aged 18-35) with 40% of all participants being female. NUYEP aimed to select youth who were willing to invest an initial amount of their own money to receive the Business and Enterprise Start-up Tool (BEST) training
<b>Kenya Youth Empowerment Project (KYEP)</b>	The KYEP reached just over 20,000 youth. The first component of the project aimed to reach 200 – 300,000 unemployed youth aged between 18 and 35. The stipend received by participants of the KKV programme was intentionally set low as a means of ensuring that only unemployed youth, from high unemployment contexts, would be attracted to and prioritized in the programme. The second component (internships) was tailored for youth, aged between 15-29, who had completed at least 8 years of schooling and who had been unemployed and out of school for at least a year. This component had initially also aimed to reach rural youth but it proved difficult to find businesses, in these areas, who could provide satisfactory internships.
<b>Employment Tax Incentive (ETI, South Africa)</b>	The ETI was available to all private and non-governmental organisations who were registered and compliant business and employee taxpayers. For an employer to be able to claim this incentive the employee for which they were claimed had to have a valid South African identity document (ID), have an asylum seeker permit or ID issued in terms of the country's Refugee Act. The employee had to be between the ages of 18 and 29 and have commenced employment with the employer no earlier than October 2013 (close to a year from the date that the ETI commenced). The ETI was also only valid to young employees who earned between R2000 and R6500 a month (130 – 430USD). The ETI could be claimed for a period of 24 months or two years, with the size of the incentive being reduced by up to 50% in the second year.
<b>Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (South Africa)</b>	Harambee offers free services to youth who are between the ages of 18 and 34, have a valid South African ID or refugee status, have at least a Grade 10, are not studying full-time, are currently unemployed, as well as youth with disabilities who may only have a Grade 9 certificate. It also offers services to businesses who are struggling to find or who are looking for young employees for learner ships, placements or employment.
<b>Zimbabwe Youth Empowerment Programme (ZYEP)</b>	The programme aimed to reach 18,500 young Zimbabweans, with the objective of 60% of these beneficiaries being young women.

<b>PROGRAMMATIC ASSUMPTIONS</b>	
<b>Youth Development Programme (YDP, Uganda)</b>	The YDP identified the following barriers to young Northern Ugandans' economic inclusion: low educational outcomes, weak access to markets, weak infrastructure, gender inequality, gender-based violence, weak social networks, weak social cohesion, lack of access to land, as well as the psychosocial and other effects of conflict and continued insecurity.
<b>Northern Uganda Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (NUYEP)</b>	The NUYEP assumed or recognised the following barriers to young Northern Ugandans' economic inclusion: A lack of employment opportunities, a lack of entrepreneurship support, the effects of conflict/ civil war, a lack of business infrastructure, poor perceptions of self-employment, a reliance of 'hand-outs' or dependency, a lack of self-responsibility, a lack of self-confidence, an over-exaggeration of the barriers to starting a small business; gender inequality, a lack of business and financial management skills, a lack of information regarding access to finance, as well as a lack of access to markets.
<b>Kenya Youth Empowerment Project (KYEP)</b>	The theory of change underpinning Component 1 was that providing young people with temporary employment opportunities would provide income opportunities and enhance communities' access to social and economic infrastructure, thereby decreasing the vulnerability of the targeted youth. Component 2 hinged on the belief that providing job relevant technical and life skills, combined with hands on experience in private sector firms, increased the likelihood that unemployed youth would be retained by their internship employers, find a job in an established firm or start their own businesses. Furthermore, it was held that the training and internships made youth more employable in that they developed new technical and job-relevant skills, core business and financial skills, life skills for better job searching and appropriate workplace etiquette, as well as certification (certificate of programme completion).
<b>Employment Tax Incentive (ETI, South Africa)</b>	The ETI assumed that the tax incentive would make employers more willing to take the risk of employing young workers with little to no work experience. It also provides young people with the opportunity to show their productivity and develop skills and references that would either increase their likelihood of remaining with an employer or finding future employment opportunities.
<b>Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (South Africa)</b>	Harambee holds that many of the barriers to young people's economic inclusion can be traced to the country's colonial and apartheid legacy. Factors that limit many young black South African's economic inclusion include spatial inequality, a lack of vertical social capital or linkages to job opportunities, a lack of access to information about opportunities, poorer quality education and educational outcomes, a lack of cultural capital, as well as a lack of recognition amongst employers around how these factors make it difficult for young people to display their true potential.
<b>Zimbabwe Youth Empowerment Programme (ZYEP)</b>	Inherent assumptions about barriers to young Zimbabweans economic inclusion include gender inequality, a lack of business and financial management skills, mentoring and network opportunities, a lack of a 'savings culture', access to financial assistance (credit), employment opportunities, work experience, as well as a low appetite for risk amongst financial institutions.

<b>EXPECTED PROGRAMME OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES</b>	
<b>Youth Development Programme (YDP, Uganda)</b>	The overall outcomes statement for the YDP highlighted an objective of increased economic opportunities and positive social engagement of youth in Northern Uganda. This outcomes statement was assessed through the following indicators: the number of YDP youth with decent jobs; the percentage of YDP youth reporting increased social capital; the relevance of courses and content offered by the YDP when compared to skills required in the local or broader labour market; as well as the extent to which the outcomes of the programme demonstrated value for money – bearing in mind social (gender, disability and citizenship) and equity gains.
<b>Northern Uganda Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (NUYEP)</b>	The main expected outcome of the programme was the creation and expansion of 6,000 youth or family owned businesses in Northern Uganda, of which 1,000 created additional jobs. This was expected to contribute to a peaceful and productive youth population with improved livelihood in Northern Uganda. The following outcomes were also identified: A positive shift in youth’s mind-set and attitude from reliance to self-confidence; increased motivation for youth to act; an increased understanding of business planning, local market, financial literacy and opportunities; as well as the extent or number of female youth who were supported in overcoming barriers to successful (business) implementation.
<b>Kenya Youth Empowerment Project (KYEP)</b>	The World Bank KYEP evaluation report stated that the original project development objectives (PDO) included supporting the Kenyan government’s efforts to increase access to youth-targeted temporary employment programs and to improve youth employability. The achievement of these PDOs was to be measured by the following performance indicators: The number of additional KKV beneficiaries; the number of additional person days provided in KKV public works; the percentage of interns who completed internships and who were immediately employed by their internship employer; the percentage of beneficiaries who found employment with a new employer or who stated their own; as well as the percentage of interns employed or self-employed six months after internship completion (all disaggregated by gender).
<b>Employment Tax Incentive (ETI, South Africa)</b>	Great effort was required to find details of the expected outputs or outcomes of the ETI. A 2016 national treasury report cited that an estimated R5 billion would be spent on the ETI over three years, supporting just over 400,000 jobs, of which 178,000 would be new jobs or jobs saved from potential loss (South African National Treasury, 2016).
<b>Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (South Africa)</b>	Harambee’s expected outputs and outcomes were inferred from a mid-term evaluation of the organisation’s work (Singizi Consulting Africa, 2018). This would include the number of youth provided with job-seeking support, supported with work readiness support, placed in organisations, employed by placement employers, who started their own businesses, as well as the cost-effectiveness of placing or helping youth secure employment.
<b>Zimbabwe Youth Empowerment Programme (ZYEP)</b>	The overall outcome of the ZYEP was that there were improved levels of employment or self-employment amongst programme beneficiaries – especially young women. Additional outcomes included beneficiaries earning increased levels of incremental income (a collective 40 million USD); at least 30% of beneficiaries, who participated in internships, being placed into formal employment 6 months post internship; at least 20% of participating young women and men having started their own enterprises, six months post interventions; and an average of 1 new job being created (1 additional employee) across the businesses set up by beneficiaries.

EVALUATION

**Youth Development Programme (YDP, Uganda)**

A knowledge, attitudes and self-reported practices (KAP) survey as well as participant tracer surveys highlighted that 83% of the first cohort of YDP beneficiaries were employed (self-employment, informal or formal sector employment) one year after completing the programme. However, only 39% of youth were employed in jobs that met the YDP criteria of ‘decent jobs’. In this context, decent jobs were defined as employment and earnings of more than 85,000 UGX for at least six months. This finding was lower than the programme expectation of at least 71% of beneficiaries being in decent jobs. The finding also highlighted potentially vast continental or regional differences in what is defined as a decent job, where the amount of 85,000UGX a month or just less than R400 a month (23 USD), is much lower than South Africa’s minimum wage of R2800 a month (160 USD).

Montrose carried out an independent survey of both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the YDP programme. A comparison of employment status suggested a positive trend in beneficiaries’ employment status as compared to non-beneficiaries. Data collected indicated that a greater percentage of beneficiaries (81%) were employed compared to non-beneficiaries (62%). In Northern Uganda, where the primary source of income is agriculture, this was also thought to demonstrate the extent to which YDP contributed to the diversification of the skills base within the region. This study also highlighted a concerning finding regarding gender equality, where male survey participants’ income was about 27% higher than female participants’ income.

A lack of data or methodological challenges also made it difficult for Montrose to assess for positive changes in youth social engagements. Subsequently, Montrose conducted focus group discussions and interviews with VTI and project staff to assess for potential changes in beneficiaries’ social engagements. According to VTI staff, prior to the inclusion of counselling services and life skills training as part of the programme, beneficiaries experienced difficulties with communication and interacting or cooperating with others, which often caused conflict that many youths found challenging. Youth-to-youth activities aimed to address these challenges and by implementing a combination of peer education, life skills and psycho-social counselling, gradual improvements were noted, specifically in methods of social interaction such as communication, interpersonal skills and conflict management. Project staff also noted that current stressors and challenges with adapting to a more structured school environment were additional challenges that required psycho-social support.

The Montrose evaluation highlighted that the overarching impact of the citizenship stream of the YDP was a social return on investment. This included young beneficiaries, who were amongst the poorest and most marginalised, being viewed as role models within their society, both by other students and the communities in which they resided. This improvement in ability to communicate, manage conflict and socialise led to a statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) increase in self-esteem amongst the youth beneficiaries who, as a result of their participation in the YDP programme, reported a heightened belief in their ability to achieve positive things. A challenge noted in the evaluation included female participants reporting that gender role expectations, such as being caregivers or homemakers, prevented their full participation in the labour market, where they often struggled to balance these expectations with the demands of their self-employment or employment. Sexual harassment in the workplace was an additional reported challenge. Likely as a result of these and other factors related to gender, female beneficiaries were less likely to report positive income post-project when compared to male beneficiaries.

EVALUATION

**Northern  
Uganda Youth  
Entrepreneurship  
Programme  
(NUYEP)**

The first outcome evaluated by Montrose included assessing the extent to which NUYEP contributed to business formation and expansion amongst beneficiaries. In addition to the trainings, business support services, mentoring and counselling were thought to contribute to this outcome.

Qualitative interviews held with beneficiaries indicated that they developed improved financial management and customer care skills, improved market knowledge and a better understanding of business, as a result of the business counselling that they received. These improvements were thought to correlate with results from EUG’s 2016 Counselling Report, where 96% of respondents (640) reported experiencing business growth as a result of counselling. These findings also highlighted that post-training services, such as mentoring and counselling, were vital to many of the beneficiaries’ gains or successes. The mentoring component of the programme encouraged beneficiaries to gain practical and hands-on support from experienced entrepreneurs and importantly, provided beneficiaries with access to well-functioning business networks through their mentors’ professional contacts. In interviews held with EUG staff and management, the counselling programme had the additional benefit of beneficiaries working with experienced business people in problem-solving and arriving at their own solutions to the challenges that they experienced. Counselling also assisted in addressing challenges with attitudes and self-esteem that may have otherwise negatively affected the development of an ‘entrepreneurial’ attitude.

Challenges to business development and expansion included a lack of access to good business locations, poor infrastructure, high competition, and small customer bases. Both those in business and those struggling with their businesses raised a lack of access to capital as one of the greatest obstacles that they experienced. In an attempt to address this challenge, beneficiaries reported attempting to access capital via loans, employment and savings, sale of agricultural goods, livestock and other assets as well as financial support from family and friends.

The majority of beneficiaries (63%) indicated having access to loans compared to only half of the non-beneficiaries interviewed. Both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries reported accessing loans through banks, village saving groups, micro finance and saving cooperatives. Interestingly, approximately half of the beneficiaries (52%) interviewed reported being part of a NUYEP savings group, with a slightly higher percentage reported to be females (53%) compared to males (51%). When considering those who had failed in their entrepreneurial ventures, only 28% had been a part of such savings and loan associations.

A second objective of the Montrose evaluation was to assess the extent to which business formation and expansion contributed to increased income and other benefits amongst beneficiaries. The evaluation highlighted that there were different levels of economic impact for beneficiaries. Those who received more intensive levels of post-training support had higher levels of sales and estimated profits than a sample of similarly educated youth. Youths who received less support did not appear to outperform estimates from the population of youths involved in small businesses.

Montrose highlighted that an important limitation in the evaluation of economic outcomes (sales and income) was that these outcomes were measured shortly after project completion. This represented a major challenge as there is a great deal of instability in enterprise development and youth employment in. By limiting the analysis to short-term outcomes, the evaluation was unable to develop a sense of medium-term changes in levels of beneficiaries’ sales or income.

Related to the outcome of increased knowledge about business opportunities, development and maintenance, NUYEP project staff made use of a 19-item pre and post-training questionnaire, which was administered prior to training and then once again after beneficiaries had completed the training. Results from this pre and post-training evaluation highlighted a 35% increase in beneficiaries’ attitudes about entrepreneurship, a 19% increase for knowledge on business formation and development and a 56% improvement with respect to gender and women’s economic empowerment. It was also noted that the pre-post changes were similar across different age groups, levels of education and the type of support provided by the project. This was thought to suggest that whilst the economic outcomes of NUYEP were dependent on the intensity of intervention support, social outcomes remained the same, despite levels of support.

Finally, as with the findings from the NYP, results from the NUYEP evaluation indicated that women experienced greater challenges or barriers in establishing, maintaining or expanding their businesses. Female beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries indicated that a lack of family (spousal) support, domestic violence, community perceptions of women as caretakers in the family, jealousy, small social networks, as well as a lack of access to capital and business support were all factors that hindered their entrepreneurial efforts.



EVALUATION	
<b>A Value for Money (VfM) analysis of YDP and NUYEP</b>	<p>The Montrose evaluation aimed to provide value for money and benefit-cost ratios for the NYP and NUYEP programmes. Such analyses are often utilised as a means of assessing whether the returns generated by project beneficiaries outweigh the intervention costs per programme beneficiary.</p> <p>The Montrose evaluation forecast for the NYP suggested that the economic benefits (income gains) received by programme beneficiaries would equal project costs per participant, after 3 years, whereas economic benefits would be 1.5 times greater than project costs, 5 years' post-intervention. In comparison, the same analyses suggested that the economic benefits for NUYEP beneficiaries would be at least 2 times greater than project costs per participant, after 3 years, and 3 times greater than project costs after 5 years.</p> <p>These results suggested that it is vital for project funders to conduct such VfM, benefit-cost and return on investment type analyses. These analyses could potentially highlight how largescale projects may require huge financial contributions in the short-term but that the economic and other returns received by beneficiaries in the mid to long-term may outweigh these costs – where beneficiaries may require less economic and social support and make greater economic and social contributions to their communities and nation.</p>
<b>Kenya Youth Empowerment Project (KYEP)</b>	<p>The first component of KYEP (KKV programme) was not evaluated, as the World Bank was forced to cancel the programme in late 2011, due to the high levels of corruption and financial mismanagement. KYEP was restructured in 2012 with both components 2 and 3 being maintained.</p> <p>Results from the impact evaluation of the second cycle of component 2 highlighted that 80% of men and 50% of women, who were placed in internships, were in paid work 14 months after internship completion. This was compared with an average of 69% of men and 43% of women in the control group (who did not receive any training or internship support). This was equivalent to 11 and 7 percentage point increases in the probability of being employed among male and female participants respectively.</p> <p>The results from the fifth iteration of the training and internship programme found that 84% of young men and 73% of young women were employed six months after their internships. The joint average of 76% greatly exceeded the PDO (Project Development Objective) target of 50%. A comparison of employment rates per iteration of the programme also displayed a strong and steady improvement, with only a 24% employment rate after the first iteration. This represented a 52% improvement in employment rates between the first and fifth iterations of the programme. These steady improvements were attributed to the revisions made to the programme after each iteration. This included adjustments to the length and type of training as well as duration of internship.</p> <p>The economic returns on investment (ROI) was an aspect of KYEP component 2 which was meant to be evaluated. However, it was noted that the organisation contracted to conduct the evaluation lacked the experience to conduct this and other more rigorous forms of evaluation.</p>

**Employment Tax Incentive (ETI, South Africa)**

An analysis of evaluations focusing on the ETI suggests that it is unclear what effect the programme has had on youth employment. Two of the most prominent evaluations of the ETI utilised data from the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) to compare youth employment rates before and after the introduction of the ETI (Ranchhod & Finn, 2014, 2016). These studies found that the ETI had no effects on youth employment rates both six and twelve months after the programme was introduced. Their modelling suggested that the new jobs created during this period would have been created in the absence of the ETI. The authors therefore also questioned the ETI's cost-effectiveness, as businesses claimed or withheld just over R6 billion worth of PAYE tax payments, between 2014 and 2016 for youth who qualified for the ETI.

These studies suggested that while South African Revenue Services (SARS) and National Treasury data illustrated that 32,368 or 15% of registered businesses in South Africa claimed the ETI for 686,402 qualifying young people (South African National Treasury, 2016), these figures did not provide an accurate representation of the number of new jobs created. It is possible that many businesses claimed for qualifying young employees who were already employed and may have continued to be employed despite the ETI. This suggests that larger businesses, who were more likely to take up the ETI, were likely to use claim the ETI as a cost-saving measure.

However, inconsistencies abound in the literature, with the National Treasury (2016) stating that 57% or 76,491 of the young employees, registered for the ETI in 2013/14, were newly registered with SARS. As many of the businesses who took up the ETI were large businesses, who are more likely to register all employees with SARS, it is possible that many of these newly registered young people were new employees.

Furthermore, while National Treasury data suggested that the largest number of ETI supported employees were employed in large businesses (more than 250 employees in a business), its data also highlighted that the vast majority of businesses registered for the ETI were small and medium-sized enterprises – where 80% of ETI registered companies had less than 100 employees. Whilst not employing the most youth, various studies on the ETI have noted how there appeared to be increased youth employment rates amongst ETI registered small to medium-sized enterprises (Ebrahim et al., 2017; Rankin & Chaterjee, 2016). These studies highlighted that it is important for National Treasury and government to dedicate greater attention to this dynamic

EVALUATION

**Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (South Africa)**

In considering the number of young jobseekers that Harambee has successfully placed in jobs, it states that it important to consider what is defined as a job. This is an important and contested issue in South Africa, where some employment opportunities may be classified as jobs but provide less than 40 days of employment per annum. While the National Treasury’s Job Fund defined employment as placements of 12 months or more, Harambee’s count of jobs created included positions that were more than 3 months in duration as well as provided more than 28 hours or 3 days of work per week.

Considering these parameters, Harambee assisted with 18,872 job placements and 15,483 self-placements between 2015 and 2018. While Harambee’s conversion rate of 13% has been close to youth labour absorption rates reported in QLFS results, it has become more cost-effective in creating these placements, where it reduced its cost per placement from 2,230 USD in 2015 to 970 USD in 2018. Considering ROI and cost-benefit ratios as utilised in the NYP and NUYEP evaluations, this suggests that the cost of placing a young person, earning a minimum wage of close to 180 USD, would be covered within 6 months; that is, young people would not require continuous or additional support if they were to remain in the position.

It also appears that Harambee has potential to reach greater scale, where it aims to increase its conversion rate to 25% (potentially by 2023). Its partnership with the Gauteng provincial government on the recent Tshepo 1 million youth empowerment programme, launched in 2017, suggests that Harambee also has the potential to create a greater amount of work opportunities, perhaps when provided with sufficient resources. In this partnership, Harambee provided work-seeker services to 500,000 youth in the province and enabled 90,000 work experiences.

An important aspect of Harambee’s approach and success has been attributed to its ability to incorporate its learnings from jobseekers and employers in to its matching tools or processes. Harambee and its partners designed matching tools that simultaneously: (1) break through the barriers facing excluded youth, (2) respond to the needs of the job, and (3) showcase the untapped potential of young people.

The importance of matching jobseekers with employers or employment opportunities was highlighted in the Siyakha Youth Assets Study, which focused on the effects of different youth employability programme features on labour market outcomes (Graham, Patel, et al., 2019). This study found that the factor that was most likely to predict employment outcomes was that of matching where, controlling for other factors, beneficiaries from programmes that incorporated matching were 28% more likely to find employment. This study also found that matching was a factor that best explained higher earnings amongst young employees. Matching also mattered more than work experience, the provision of stipends, formal accreditation, and programme duration. Even for those who remained unemployed, being in an intervention that included matching helped to reduce the average time they remained unemployed. It increased the number of job applications they made, and the probability they continued to actively look for work.

**Zimbabwe Youth Empowerment Programme (ZYEP)**

At the end of the programme, 20,083 youth had been trained (against a revised target of 18,500), 66% of whom are young women (target for women being 65%). At an outcome level, the target for total value of incremental income earned was not reached, however actual earnings of £23.6m (\$31,171,482 or 77% of target) was reported to have a significant impact for young beneficiaries. A strong indication of the effectiveness of the programme was that 80% of young people participating in Z:W arranged internships transitioned into formal employment 6 months post internship (significantly above the target of 30%). An equally positive result was that almost one in five young people who participated in the entrepreneurship stream started their own businesses within 6 months of receiving Z:W support (18% against a target of 20%).

However, the creation and growth of these new micro-enterprises was not jobs-rich, with only 0.13 new jobs created in these youth-owned businesses against the targeted average of 1 job per enterprise. Although disappointing this result was not entirely unexpected, with general economic conditions reflective of the fact that many of these micro-enterprises were being used as vehicles of resilience, by ‘reluctant entrepreneurs’, in very difficult economic circumstances.

I N S I G H T S	
<b>Youth Development Programme (YDP, Uganda)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Future programmes should engage more extensively with employers, regarding their satisfaction with beneficiaries, in order to revise the content of their programmes and better equip beneficiaries for the workplace.</li> <li>2) The NYP included three labour market needs assessments in the development of programme content, specifically the vocational skills offered in the programme. This contributed to greater levels of skills relevance and likely a higher uptake of beneficiaries by employers.</li> <li>3) Citizenship training (including human capacity and soft skills) can contribute to a number of benefits for young people and their communities. This includes beneficiaries potentially experiencing greater levels of self-esteem, social capital, social inclusion, active citizenship and leadership.</li> <li>4) Young women continue to experience greater barriers to economic inclusion (for example, small business development and maintenance)</li> <li>5) Measures of return on investment can be an important way of gauging programme effectiveness, assessing programme sustainability, as well as comparing programme effectiveness.</li> </ol>
<b>Northern Uganda Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (NUYEP)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Issues such as nepotism and corruption greatly hampered the KKV public employment programme. Great attention should be paid to issues of beneficiary selection processes, procurement, financial management processes and so forth.</li> <li>2) It can be difficult for implementing agents to manage selection or inclusion criteria (for example, ensuring that young people are NEET)</li> <li>3) Whilst the process of matching can be an effective component of youth employment initiatives, the process can be resource and network-intensive as well as spatially unequal.</li> <li>4) Training content and internship opportunities are more effective when employers are included in the conceptualisation and evaluation of such processes.</li> </ol>
<b>Employment Tax Incentive (ETI, South Africa)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Programme developers should explicitly develop evaluation frameworks (outcomes, indicators, means of verification...) in order to assess programme effectiveness, return on investment and sustainability</li> <li>2) Employment tax incentives or other incentive options could represent a means of bolstering youth employment and absorption rates in small to medium size enterprises.</li> </ol>
<b>Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (South Africa)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Improved matching processes could greatly improve youth labour absorption rates</li> <li>2) Policy makers, programme developers, academics and other stakeholders should place a greater emphasis on understanding the factors that hinder or facilitate employers' (demand side) ability to recruit or offer young people employment opportunities.</li> <li>3) Traditional means of signalling or identifying young employee potential, such as matric certificates, numeracy and literacy skills, often say more about historical disadvantage than actual potential. Recruitment agencies, HR and employees can be assisted in developing alternative, reliable measures of young employee aptitudes and potential, which do not rely as heavily on previous formal learning opportunities.</li> <li>4) Young people's ability to find employment is limited by the costs associated with job seeking (for example, transport, printing and data costs).</li> </ol>
<b>Zimbabwe Youth Empowerment Programme (ZYEP)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Volunteering can represent a valuable means of gaining work experience when the private sector lacks the ability to pay stipends for learnership or internship opportunities. Two potential obstacles include social and familial perceptions of the value of volunteerism as well as exclusion from such opportunities due to the costs associated with volunteerism (for example, transport costs).</li> <li>2) Financial institutions' aversion to offering young entrepreneurs loans can be partly overcome by adjusting their lending patterns. Stepped up lending, where young people borrow incrementally larger amounts over several loan cycles represents a means for institutions to manage risk as well as an opportunity for young entrepreneurs to build a credit profile and manage their own financial risks.</li> <li>3) An evaluation of ZYEP highlighted potential gender differences in financial management and loan repayments. Financial institutions, policy and programme developers can take note of this finding, as the programmes have highlighted how young women continue to experience lower levels of access to finance.</li> <li>4) Life skills or human capacity skills development should be an essential component of any youth employment programme.</li> </ol>

## 5.1. Youth programming: Discussion

A number of programmatic challenges and best practices were identified through interviewees with subject specialists. The first challenge echoed a criticism of youth policy formation; namely, that many youth programmes are based on **prescriptive, exclusionary, top-down approaches**. This suggests that politicians, funders and other stakeholders may shape the focus and content of youth programmes and that young people themselves play a limited role in the conceptualisation of such programmes. Such practices may be aligned with problematic youth narratives and attitudes that position older, more educated or politically powerful groups as ‘knowing’ and young people as being uneducated, ignorant and naïve. An associated challenge with such an approach to youth programme development is that they are often based on these stakeholders’ assumptions rather than evidence-based practices, needs assessments or consultations with youth (potential beneficiaries).

*Some of these programmes prescribe solutions without taking the needs of young people in to account... The problem is the donor mentality of ‘I think young people need this’ but they do not consult with young people. For example, they just hear that young people are unemployed and prescribe a plethora of employment initiatives that have worked in other places. They often do not make a connection between work opportunities and specific youth needs like the fact that work is identity and not just about having something to do. These perspectives affect programme design and determine the effectiveness of a project (KS).*

Interviewees identified a number of challenges with such an approach. Firstly, while programmes are not well-aligned with young people’s needs, they are still implemented simply because funding is available. Secondly, programmes that do not include young people often fail to recognise the context-specific factors that may facilitate or hinder programme outcomes. Thirdly, such programmes are likely to foster greater youth dependence rather empowerment.

*You want to dictate what young people should do on the ground but the realities are that young people know what is happening [in their communities]... Dictating what happens also creates a gap in ownership because the programme does not resonate with them... "KM)*

*If you do not take in to account that context and allow programmes to come from the ground up, what then tends to happen is that our policies and programmes are prescriptive. [As a result], our people tend to become mechanical and think, ‘hey, this project does not make sense but I will implement it anyway because I have the money’... You find you are throwing money at programmes that do not make sense or even make a difference. Many years later, the problem is not solved but the resources spent are enormous (KS).*

Multiple interviewees agreed that a good practice in programme development included the use of **co-creation or participatory approaches**, where potential beneficiaries [e.g. youth] are involved in programme conceptualisation through to evaluation. The use of participatory needs assessments also formed part of this process.

A related issue was that of difficulties with **programme sustainability**. In many cases, when governments implemented largescale programmes, funding was attained through loans, which needed to be repaid, rather than grants. While youth economic programmes may have had promising outcomes, the scale of youth unemployment in many countries required continuous programming and funding, which was perhaps unsustainable for governments.

This issue also spoke to that of **programme scalability**. If governments struggled to budget for largescale youth programmes, it follows that it would be difficult to expand programmes to meet the huge demands associated with the youth bulge. Scalability and programme success was also greatly affected by political issues such as low levels of trust and civic cohesion, corruption, political patronage and electioneering (jobs for votes). An interviewee noted these political issues when reflecting on the challenges faced in the KYEP.

*One of the issues is that of politicians getting involved [in programmes] and manipulating the process. [KYEP] ended up being a political programme or project more than a programme that was meant to objectively support the youth (RO).*

A fifth issue related to a continued lack of stakeholder collaboration on youth social and economic programmes. This included a lack of collaboration or coordination between those who funded youth programmes (such as international donors), which likely contributed to programme overlaps or gaps, reduced impact and programme sustainability.

As noted in the literature, some interviewees highlighted how comprehensive or integrated approaches to youth programme often yielded the greatest impact. These types of programmes recognised the multiple factors that influenced young people’s social and economic inclusion. For example, related to youth employment, a comprehensive approach recognised the need to focus on supply side and demand side factors, as well as the interaction between the two, in order to foster greater youth economic inclusion. While programmes such as the Kenya Youth Empowerment Programme (KYEP) and Harambee have noted the importance of partnering with and including the private sector in programme development, interviewees noted that this continued to represent a challenge. This may be due to a lack of businesses who are able to offer placements to young people, due to economic, human or other resource constraints, difficulties in offering young people paid positions, or weak partnerships between stakeholders (such as government and the private sector).

*One of the challenges that they have had in the second phase of the KYEP is that particular element of matching and even placements because government does not have those kind of [strong] relationships [with the private sector] (RO).*

A last programmatic challenge, identified through the specialist interviews, included the discourses surrounding **skills development and entrepreneurship**. Three of the interviewees highlighted that technical skills development should be viewed as an important aspect of youth employment programmes but its importance is often overstated. In contrast, human capital or soft skills, such as self-esteem, psychosocial well-being, job readiness and critical thinking, continue to be underappreciated.

*Many youth employment projects, one of the things that makes them successful is behaviour change or soft [skills] trainings. A lot of the time, programme developers want to train you to be a mechanic but you will never be a successful mechanic if you do not know how to keep your books or have the discipline and honesty to be faithful in your work (KS).*

Entrepreneurship programmes have also come to dominate youth employment or economic programmes. While politicians and policy makers may be justified in stating that the private and public sectors cannot meet the needs created by the youth bulge and that many young people are involved in the informal sector, the political push for youth to be entrepreneurs, self-employed or job-creators may also represent a form of scapegoating or blaming the victim. As noted in the literature, interviewees highlighted that being a successful entrepreneur requires a great deal of **mentorship** and that only a small percentage of young people may be able to earn decent wages through self-employment.

*The pressure on young people to become entrepreneurs, because nobody else has any answers, is foolish. It is really difficult to be an entrepreneur, even when you have the social and financial capital and education. Nevermind expecting young people, who have had poor quality education, are income-deprived, etc... to run their own businesses... I think it is a cop-out (LG).*

## 6. Integrated discussion

This report set out to review literature, policies and largescale youth socio and economic inclusion programmes, in Southern and East Africa, as a means of gaining key youth inclusion programming and policy insights. The literature review noted that a great deal of literature focused on sub-Saharan Africa as a region. Literature emanating from the four country case studies (Kenya, Uganda, South Africa and Zimbabwe), highlighted strong overlaps with this regionally focused literature. Key policies included in this review included the African Union’s African Youth Charter as well as national youth policies (NYPs), though interviews with subject specialists how each country often had a vast array of policies that spoke to issues of youth development and inclusion. A review of this array of policies was beyond the scope of this report. Six largescale youth programmes met the criteria set out for this review and the key aspects thereof were highlighted in this report.

A review of the themes deriving from the literature, policy and programme reviews highlighted a number of overlaps. These overlapping themes are discussed below:

### 6.1. Definitions of youth:

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A review of literature, policy and programming highlighted that definitions or conceptualisations of youth remain problematic. The problem inherent in these definitions is that they continue to portray young people as a relatively homogenous group of people where, in reality, there is a huge amount of heterogeneity or diversity, in terms of identifying factors, amongst people aged between 15 and 30 or 15 and 35. Narrow definitions of youth were identified as contributing to youth sub-groups exclusion in both policy and programming.

### 6.2. Youth narratives

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A pathologising view of young people continues to pervade policies and programmes meant to benefit youth. Such narratives included the view of young people as being troublesome, entitled, impatient, naïve, irresponsible, aggressive or violent. The literature review highlighted how such youth narratives represented a form of blaming the victim, where the source of responsibility or blame for behaviour or conditions is located within the individual (or group of individuals) whilst neglecting the external economic, political, spiritual and other factors that contribute to these behaviours or conditions.

Such problematizing narratives were identified in both youth policy and programming, where policy and programme developers, such as politicians and donors, acted in a manner where they viewed themselves as knowing best. This contributed to youth exclusion from discussions around policy and programme conceptualisation as well as the implicit rejection of evidence-based approaches. Such narratives also shaped social expectations and psyches, thereby also influencing perceptions of young people, young people’s perceptions of themselves as well as their behaviours.



### **6.3. Developmental discourses**

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Broader discourses around development also appeared to contribute to youth exclusion. This included the stance or ideologies that states adopted in relation to economic development. Neo-liberal policies were likely to view economic growth and progress as growth in GDP rather than reductions in poverty or an increase in job-rich growth. Economic and political ideologies were also likely to shape the role that government adopted in relation to development. While interviewees quoted neo-liberal views of the developmental state, where the state is merely responsible for creating a policy environment that facilitates economic inclusion, the reality is that many African states have had to adopt a more hands-on approach to development – as a means of overcoming colonial legacies.

### **6.4. Governance issues**

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Whilst playing a central role in development, many developing countries have achieved varying levels of success in terms of developing effective governance frameworks and mechanisms. This was highlighted in themes related to difficulties with policy implementation, interdepartmental and inter-sectoral collaboration, a lack of policy harmonisation, as well as issues of corruption and political patronage. This challenge related to the issue of how young people and other actors hold governments accountable. This question is even more pertinent in countries where formal, democratic accountability mechanisms have never existed or have eroded.

### **6.5. The entrepreneurship discourse**

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The drive for young people to become entrepreneurs as well as job creators represents a great dilemma. As noted in the literature review, more than 75% of young Africans find themselves self-employed or working in the informal sector. With seemingly poor prospects of employment in the formal sector, perhaps there is a need to provide young people with the skills that they may need to run microenterprises or small businesses more effectively. Concurrently, multiple sources warn that the massive drive towards youth self-employment may represent a form of blaming the victim and scapegoating – a means for governments to exonerate themselves from their inability to create jobs at scale or to equip young people with the skills that they need in the modern job market.

### **6.6. Shortfalls in education systems and career-pathing**

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Education plays an important role in young people's social, economic, political, spiritual and other experiences, positions and contributions to their families, communities and societies as a whole. Literature suggested that while there have been educational reforms in all country cases, especially in their transitions from colonialism, education systems still struggle to prepare young people for the modern world of work; both in terms of foundational technical as well as human capacity skills (self-esteem, job readiness...). Furthermore, stakeholders such as the state and private sector still struggle to recognise the micro-level factors that facilitated or hindered young people's educational or employment outcomes.

## 6.7. The need for a comprehensive approach to youth inclusion

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Shortfalls in education systems and career-pathing also related to supply side (youth) factors that may facilitate or hinder youth economic inclusion. Perhaps still emanating from pathologising narratives, many programmes assumed that young people face economic exclusion due to a lack of skills (challenges on the supply side) and that equipping young people with technical skills will resolve this issue. However, supply side factors at multiple levels contributed to youth economic exclusion. This included socioeconomic status, gender, race, levels of social and cultural capital, the high costs associated with jobseeking, psychosocial well-being, as well as job readiness skills.

Literature and specialist interviews highlighted that far less is known about the demand side factors that either facilitate or hinder employers' ability or willingness to offer employment opportunities to young people. While the logic behind the Employment Tax Incentive suggested that employers were reluctant to risk hiring young people without employment track records, learnings from the South African social enterprise, Harambee, highlighted how human resource constraints, traditional means of evaluating employee potential, as well as employers' difficulty in finding talent, represented additional demand side factors that influenced youth labour absorption.

A focus on supply side, demand side and the interaction between the two represent important aspects of a more comprehensive approach to youth economic inclusion. While the effectiveness of such programmes appears to be gaining greater recognition, the complexity of such initiatives remains a challenge, with the need for strong stakeholder collaboration and matching processes being paramount. Furthermore, interviewees recognised the need to move beyond a focus on youth economic inclusion, recognising how social, psychological and other aspects of young people are equally important to their well-being and inclusion.

## 6.8 Policy and programme evaluation

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The importance of policy and programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is recognised in literature, policy, programmes and amongst subject specialists. However, despite multiple references to its importance in NYPS, there is a continued lack of policy and programme M&E frameworks. This represents a serious issue, given that donors and governments often spend millions and occasionally billions of USDs on programmes.

However, this lack of focus and real interest in M&E is not unique to government, with civil society also greatly lacking in this area. While literature and specialists have attributed this issue to a lack of budget, implementation or M&E expertise, it also likely stems from the previously mentioned governance issues and lack of pressure, from different stakeholders (including youth), to prioritise evidence-based practices.

## 7. Recommendations

The following recommendations represent an integration of the themes highlighted in the discussion section (section 7):

- 1. Greater awareness of how youth narratives or discourses influence policies and programmes:** This report highlighted how the concept of youth often still pathologises this group. This includes notions of young people as ignorant, naïve, impatient, entitled and dangerous. This discourse undermines efforts to include youth in youth policy and programme formation, the types of programmes that are developed and the role of youth in leading such initiatives.
- 2. Develop a balanced view of youth entrepreneurship or self-employment:** The report highlighted how policy and programmes may be over-emphasizing the need for entrepreneurship and youth self-employment. On the one hand, this emphasis may be aligned with the reality where the vast majority of young Africans are earning an income through self-employment or precarious employment in the informal sector and that such young people may benefit from entrepreneurship training. On the other hand, an over-emphasis on self-employment may distract from the state or government's responsibility, at the very least, to invest in and create an environment that is conducive to more formal or less precarious employment opportunities. A more balanced approach to self-employment is required – one that recognises that great challenges faced by those who are self-employed and does not blame youth for their lack of a stable income. .
- 3. Participatory and inclusive approaches to policy and programme development and evaluation:** Policy and programme development still follow top-down, bureaucratic processes that position middle-aged and elderly adults as knowing best. This has contributed to policies and programmes that do not fully recognise the diversity of young people or their needs. More participatory processes to policy and programme formation and evaluation would assist in addressing these issues. Whilst potentially more resource intensive, the approaches are likely to contribute to more efficient and effective policy and programme outcomes.
- 4. Intersectional, holistic approaches to policy and programme formation and evaluation:** Many youth policies and programmes have continued to adopt narrow definitions of youth. This contributes to youth exclusion from such policies and programmes. Policy and programme developers should adopt intersectional and holistic approaches to policy and programme formation. Aligned with previous recommendations, this includes establishing guidelines that prioritise participatory practices – such as situational analyses, diversity and stakeholder mapping exercises. These practices may assist in developing a better sense of the ways in which young people differ from each other (for example, age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, educational outcomes, religion, tribe, culture, language proficiency, physical and psychological ability, political affiliation...) and how these differences influence their lived experiences and ability to participate in and benefit from policies and programmes.
- 5. Meaningful inter-sectoral collaboration:** In addition to greater youth inclusion, this report highlighted how the private sector is still excluded from policy and programme formation through to evaluation processes. The sector is viewed as a jobs or cash-cow rather than an equal partner.

Subsequently, there is a great need for the state to include stakeholders, such as youth and the private sector, in a manner that facilitates their full inclusion, buy-in and support of policies and programmes.

6. **Comprehensive approaches to youth economic inclusion:** Approaches that focus on the supply side, demand side and the interaction between the two are increasingly being recognised as more effective approaches to youth economic inclusion. However, there is still a need for policymakers, programme developers, academics and other stakeholders to develop a much deeper understanding of the factors that facilitate or hinder young people as well as employers' ability to identify and connect with each other, as well as maintain working relationships.
7. **Addressing challenges with policy implementation:** A number of promising youth policies were identified at the regional as well as national levels. Whilst aspects of these policies were implemented, many other aspects and outcomes were not achieved. A lack of budgeting, political will, coordination between policies, government departments and stakeholders contributed to this challenge. One potential solution to this challenge relates to the need for youth or intersectional mainstreaming as an overall approach to policy and strategy development and evaluation. For example, in the South African context, the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 represents the master plan for all aspects of the country's development. As such, national youth policies and outcomes should be integrated within such master plans as well as medium-term evaluations and frameworks – such as South Africa's Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) 2019 – 2024.
8. **Prioritise policy and programme evaluation:** Millions and often billions of USDs have been spent on youth initiatives or development projects. Despite such efforts, issues of youth exclusion continue to grow exponentially. This is strongly tied to the lack of prioritisation of policy and programme evaluation as well as evidence-based practices.
9. **The need for more expansive, coordinated youth advocacy:** Pathologising narratives of young people are pervasive and held by policymakers, programme developers, citizens as well as young people. Raising awareness about these narratives and conveying messages, via different platforms, about the many positive contributions that young people make to their communities and societies could assist in challenges these narratives. Furthermore, even the grandest and most eloquent strategies and policies are meaningless without effective implementation. Challenges with youth policy implementation are exacerbated by a lack of young people's inclusion in, awareness and buy-in of such policies. More coordinated awareness-raising and advocacy at local, national, regional and trans-regional levels can assist in raising awareness as well as in placing pressure on governments to take youth mainstreaming or youth policy implementation more seriously.

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