



Skills training and labour market integration as violence reduction tools: What will it take?

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1. The (missing) link between skills, market integration and social integration

2. Evidence from conflict-sensitive employment promotion

3. Lessons learnt and challenges

1. The (missing) link between skills, market integration and social integration

Many different ways linking skills training to reduced violence: through...

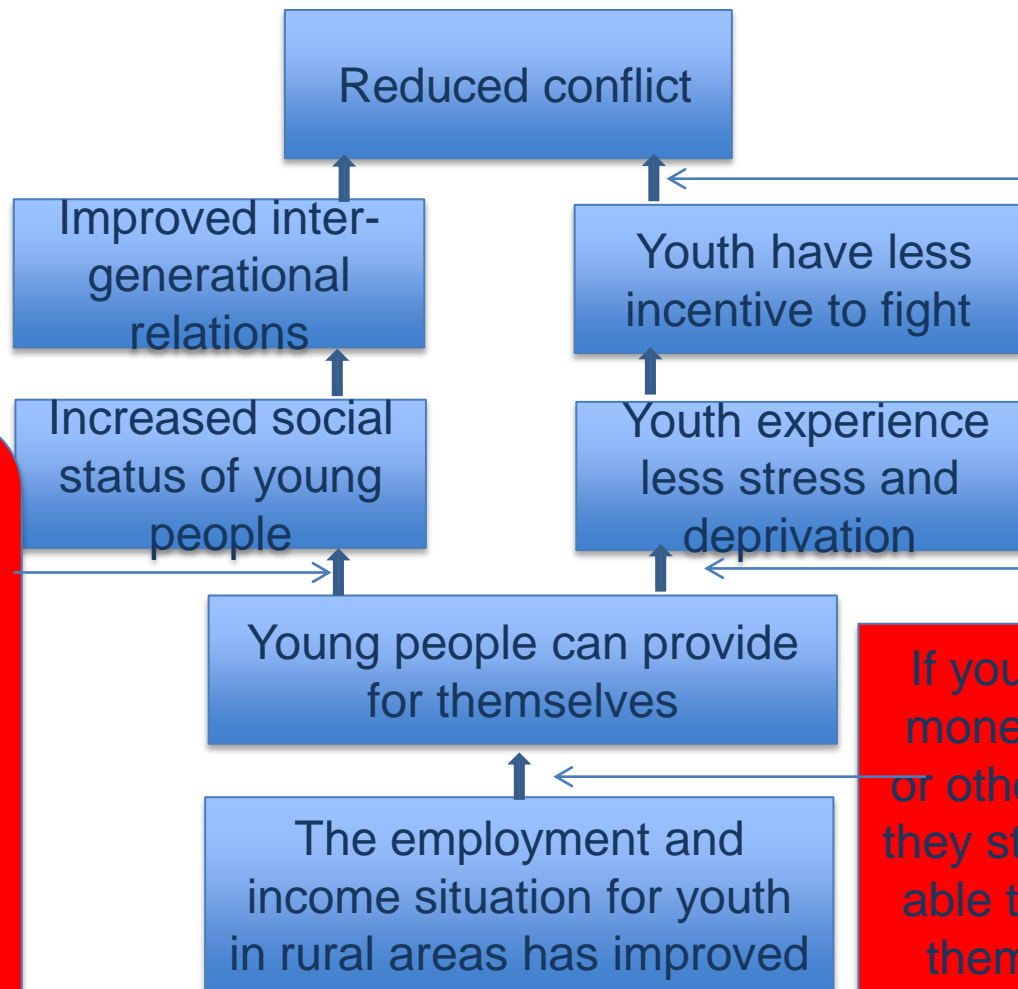
- ...decreased income poverty
- ... decreased horizontal inequality, grievances
- ... increased state legitimacy
- ... increased self-esteem and a vision
- ... increased interaction between individuals/groups and across conflict lines, critical ingredients to social cohesion
- ...increased costs of violence: someone with a job's has got something to lose

But: *“Unfortunately, these links – from labour market and entrepreneurship interventions to actual employment, and from employment to stability - are based first on faith, second on theory and last on evidence.”* (Chris Blattman)

Assumptions need to be based on context analysis, and made explicit

- Does unemployment, lack of skills make conflict/VE more likely?
- Why? In combination with what other factors?

1. The (missing) link between skills, market integration and social integration



Others in the community might be jealous of the new wealth, which might cause conflict

If the work is exploitative or dangerous, it might increase stress

If youth use extra money for alcohol or other vices, then they still may not be able to provide for themselves and their families

There are many reasons for low social status of young people, such as tradition, vested interests, etc. increased employment and income might not be sufficient to overturn these.

2. Evidence from conflict-sensitive employment promotion



Employment Promotion in Contexts of Conflict, Fragility and Violence

Opportunities and Challenges for Peacebuilding

Presents compelling employment interventions that

- i) have been effective despite CFV or
- ii) have have been effective while decreasing propensity of CFV.

Starting point are recurrent factors/causes of CFV:

- weak state legitimacy and capacity;
- mistrust and structural discrimination;
- extreme socio-economic disparities;
- youth unemployment;
- organised crime.

2. Evidence from conflict-sensitive employment promotion

Dealing with weak state capacity and societal fragility: mistrust and structural discrimination

Challenge:

Fragile societies (and settings with high propensity of VE) are often marked by structural, entrenched inequalities btw. different identity groups.

State is not only weak in delivering services, but also not perceived as legitimate

Markets – formal and informal - tend to mirror societal fragility:

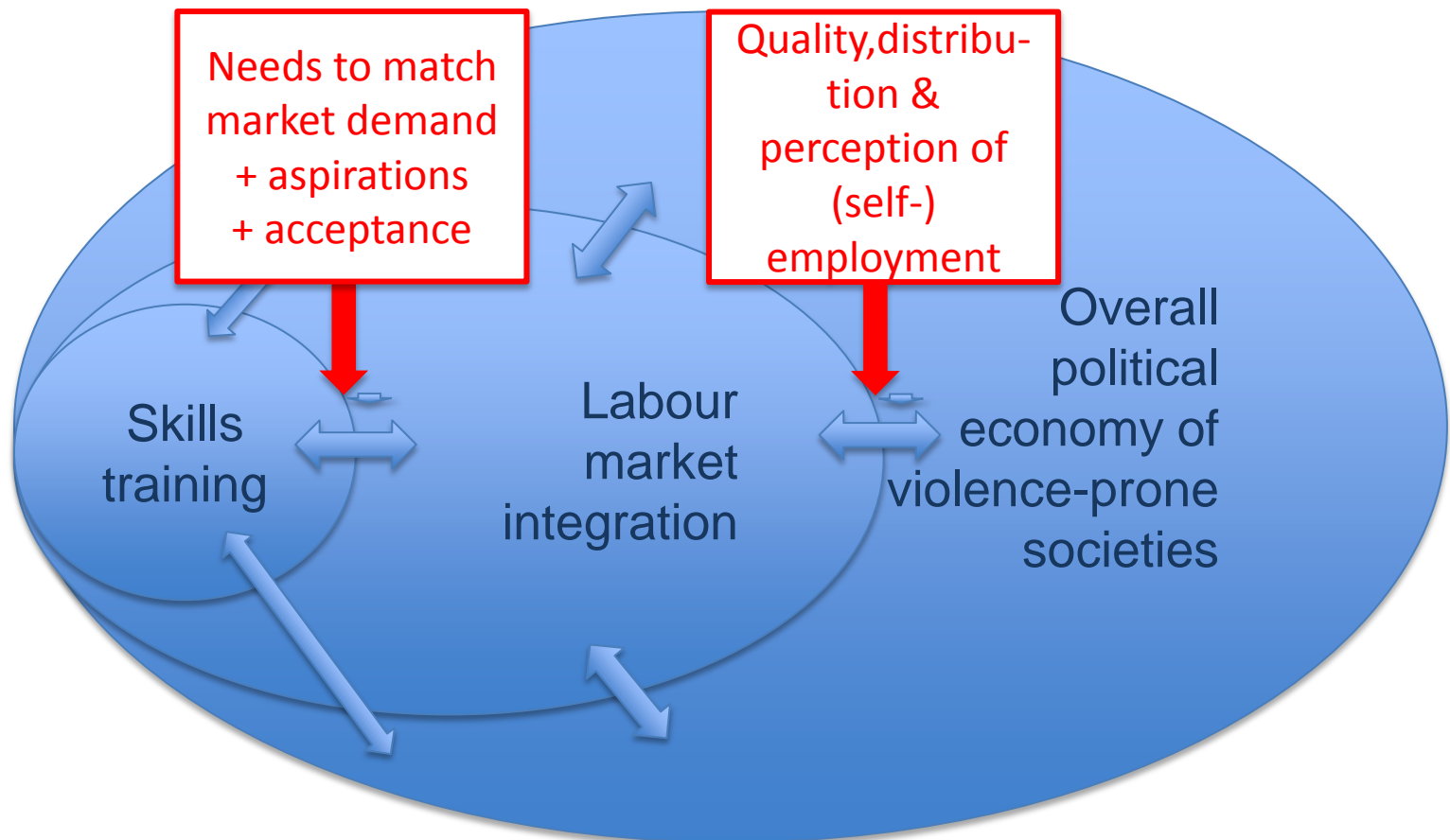
exp. Fragmented business associations: Sri Lanka,

hiring practices of SMEs in Afghanistan, Pakistan, SSand Burundi

Politicisation of labour market: no level playing field in Tunisia & Egypt

In this context: ST and labour market are about access and power.

1. The (missing) link between skills, market integration and social integration



2. Evidence from conflict-sensitive employment promotion

How to work with weak government capacity?

Successful Youth Opportunity Programme in Northern Uganda:

- Cash grant of 382 USD for 535 groups (of 10-40 prs) in Northern Uganda
- 41% higher income than that of control group (84% for women)
- But no measurable impact on social cohesion,
- No supervision, but long-term evaluation

Success factors:

- Self-targeting
- Groups existed prior to programme
- Group coordinators received 2% of the grant
- Grant addressed major obstacle.
- Little admin capacity required.

2. Evidence from conflict-sensitive employment promotion

Other example: WB funded National employment programme in Liberia

- Context analysis showed: socio-political exclusion not unemployment is the main source of grievance.
- Targeting: no focus on ex-combatants and women
- Challenging donor demands

Process matters as much as output: public lottery

- Sense of fairness and equality within targeting community
- Transparency and accountability
- Balanced distribution of employment, ST and income gains.

2. Evidence from conflict-sensitive employment promotion

How to work despite societal fragility and distorted markets?

Ex 1: Support the informal sector and strengthen political participation

- Liberian Employment Action Plan: promote informal sector (for both greater productivity and greater say in labour market reforms)

Ex 2: Working with business associations/chambers: Sri Lanka, Nepal

- Promoting inter-group interaction at firm level,
- conflict-sensitive hiring and procurement strategies
- PPD

Recommendations

- A thorough understanding of the political economy of markets
- Ensure quality of employment to prevent employment from becoming a source of disparity and instead of a way out of it.
- Prioritise political participation, e.g. through the creation of labour unions, revamping labour laws.

2. Lessons learnt and challenges

Lessons learnt

- **Skills training is more likely to lead to labour market integration if:**
 - Designed with the target group and its communities;
 - With involvement of the private sector, knowledge of demand side;
 - Implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner; aware of politics involved.
- **Skills training is more likely to lead to societal integration if:**
 - (but not only if) it results in economic integration;
 - the interventions does not exacerbate factors of fragility.

2. Lessons learnt and challenges

What will it take:

- Clarity about goals, not every VT interventions had to address VE, but has to DNH
- Politically informed context analysis vs technical approach / mandate
- Longer breath: to build trust and restore relationships vs short funding streams
- Flexibility to experiment & adjust vs donor accountability
- Awareness process as important than outcomes
- Perceptions matter as much as facts
- Joint-up interventions, coordination and more consistent info sharing

2. Lessons learnt and challenges

If VT interventions affectively achieve labour market integration without exacerbating fragility factors, they have achieved a lot.

For that to happen:

- **Understanding of VT and labour as arenas of political and economic competition and power.**
- **Readiness for joint-up approaches.**

