



Swisscontact

Niger: Youth Training and Employment in a « fragile » context

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The “fragile” context in Niger

- A poor country with a very young population: **85 %** of the population live with less than 2 \$ a day; **66 %** are under the age of 25
- A weak economic tissue, limited job opportunities: only **1 %** of the working population in the modern sector; **75 %** of jobs in the traditional/informal sector
- A government failing to fulfill its duties: little or no recruitment in the public service for **20 years**; collapse of services in the public sector (education, health, etc.)
- Very high unemployment rate among young people: **24 %** of the population aged between 15 and 29 are unemployed



Risks of the “fragile” context

- Social crisis brings about tensions coming from people’s frustration and despair, mainly from the young and unemployed.
- An economic crisis leading to increasing living expenses, corruption, migration of qualified workers, massive migration to the cities.
- A security crisis caused by unemployment, general hopelessness and the hunt for easy money that may lead people to enroll with fundamentalist groups (Aqmi) or mercenary armies (in Libya for instance) and/or simply to become criminals.



The professional integration of young people, a critical challenge

State policies respond basically to this challenge:

- Government: in its “Accelerated Development Strategy” and the general Poverty Reduction Strategy 2008-2012, which are the legal bases for all development activities in the Country.
- Also the new Head of State has outlined this challenge in his election campaign for 201 1.

« Youth Training and Employment Program » implemented by SC Niger and its partners is designed to help implementing actions to face the challenge



The Youth Training and Employment Program

Objective:

- Increase job opportunities and labor market integration of young people (both sexes).

Starting point:

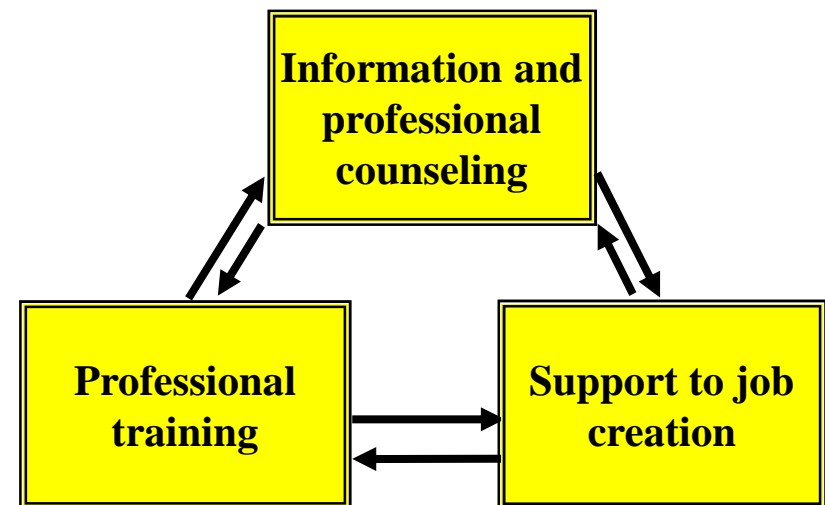
- Lack of technical skills (general, technical).
- Lack of information and vision regarding job opportunities, training centers, etc.
- Lack of support to get self-employed.



A systemic approach to enhance labor market integration

How ?

- A. By facilitating information on professional projects for young people through information platforms, professional counseling and supervision across the country.
- B. By implementing adapted training offers (modular, short term etc.) on the basis of the need of the local economy.
- C. By supporting trained youth to have access to services which help them to become self-employed or to access the labor market (formal and non formal).





Roles of private and public sectors

Private sector

- Ideally: Demand side of training – defines qualifications of a needed qualified workforce; creates employment for trained people
- Reality Niger: Extremely weak formal and informal private sector – jobs mainly created through self-employment (although with potential)

Public sector

- Ideally: Regulates VET/training (definition of standards, certification) and finances it (state subvention and/or labor tax)
- Reality Niger: Regulation on its way – financing hardly possible (difference with other West African countries)



Achieved results

Labor market integration

- 55 % of the trained (in a sample of 196 young over 2 years) with no job and revenue before training have a stable income generating activity (one year after training) – above the legally defined monthly wage of FCFA 30'000.

Increase of revenues

- 67 % of the trained craftsmen (a sample of 249 people) who received training while already being in business have reported a significant increase of their revenue (from 20 % to 120 %) one year after training.



Other expected results (1)

Systemic intervention leads to sustainability guaranteed by multiple stakeholders

- As a facilitator bringing together multiple stakeholders, the program works through any kind of existing structures (public and private) in order to give young people (demand) sustainable access to local support structures (offer).

Keeping young people in their rural background

- By operating in rural areas, by putting in practice training in accordance with local economic needs (gardening, rearing, farming, mechanical farming tools, etc.) the program contributes to minimize rural migration which is the main cause of urban unemployment.



Other expected results (2)

Strengthening government action

- By closely working together with the public actors in the field of training (overall supervision, regulation, certification) the program supports the State in its basic task to provide a positive framework for job creation within its National Poverty reduction Strategy (central and decentralized structures)

Prevention of crisis

- By focusing on the employment of young people, the program helps to prevent and mitigate social, economic and security crises.