

# Research proposal essay sample



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## DEFINITION

What is unemployment?

- According to Bureau of labor statistics (BLS) it is defined as people who do not have a job, have actively looked for work in the past four weeks, and are currently available for work.
- Refers to a situation where people are capable and will to work at the going wage rates but cannot secure jobs. (Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) Business studies Form 3
- Is a condition of being unemployed (Collins paper work English dictionary. Bank of English).

- Is the condition of one who is capable of working, actively seeking work, but is unable to find any work(encyclopedia bratanica, 2012)
- Also defined by Richard curtains as an economic condition marked by the fact that actively individual seeking for jobs remain un hired

Prevalence of youth unemployment in Kenya

Africa is the world's youngest continent, as the proportion of youth among the region's total population is higher than in any other continent. About 36.8 percent of Africa's work force are youth; and 23.7 per cent in North Africa; particularly affecting young females. In 2009, the youth unemployment rate was at 11.9 per cent in Sub Saharan Africa. High rates of youth unemployment represent both widespread personal misfortune for individuals and a lost opportunity for critical national and global economic development.

Unemployment in youth has been shown to have lifelong effects on income and employment stability, because affected young people start out with weaker early-career credentials, and show lower confidence and resilience in

dealing with labor market opportunities and setbacks over the course of their working lives. The recent economic crisis has had a disproportionate - and disproportionately long-term - effect on young people. According to the ILO's Global Employment Trends for Youth, 2011 Update ([www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)), the global youth unemployment rate rose from 11.8 to 12.7 percent between 2008 and 2009, the largest one-year increase on record. In the ten years from 1998 and

#### A CASE STUDY OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN KENYA 1

2008, youth unemployment increased by a total of 0.2 percent or about 100,000 persons per year; but from 2008 to 2009 it increased by 5.3%, or 4.5 million persons, in a single year. By the end of 2010, an estimated 75.8 million young people were unemployed (UN, "World Youth Report," 2012). At the same time, the labor force participation rate for young people has continued its downward trend: after declining from 53.8 to 50.1 percent between 1998 and 2008, it fell to 48.8 percent by 2011. (ILO Global Employment Trends for Youth, 2011 Update) The youth unemployment challenge is particularly intense in the developed world.

In Spain, a majority of youth (51.4%) was unemployed as of the third quarter of 2011, and the figure was nearly as high in Greece (46.6%). The youth unemployment rate in Portugal was 30.7%, and in the UK 22%. ("The Jobless Young: Left Behind," *The Economist*, September 10, 2011). In the developing world, high youth unemployment represents lost potential for national economic transformation, and high numbers of economically frustrated youth may contribute to social instability. Employment remains

the main concern of youth in the region. Sub-regional and country variations are important to note.

For example, youth unemployment rates in Malawi and Rwanda are under 5 percent, whereas rates reach above 20 percent in Ghana, Zambia and Zimbabwe and above 30 percent in Mauritius, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland, Algeria and South Africa (where unemployment rates climb to 60 percent for young women). The exceptionally high unemployment rates in Africa can be interpreted as one of the main factors behind the revolutionary activity and recent civil unrest in North Africa and elsewhere in the region.

Two of the principal reasons for Africa's high unemployment rates are: a mismatch between educational systems and the skills needed in the labour market, and the saturated public services and small private sector bases that are unable to employ large numbers of people. Other relevant reasons include labour demand barriers, such as observed discrimination by employers towards young people on the grounds of lack of experience; information gaps between job seekers and potential employers; and barriers to the creation and development of business opportunities, particularly in gaining access to financial, physical and social capital. Another reason for high youth unemployment rates is a mindset that tells educated young people that they must be employed in white-collar jobs. In relation to this sentiment, a low status is also afforded to vocational training.

Furthermore, most young people in Africa do not finish school and another reason for high youth unemployment rates is a mindset that tells educated young people that they must be employed in white-collar jobs. In relation to

this sentiment, a low status is also afforded to vocational training. Furthermore, most young people in Africa do not finish school and universities with a plan to engage in self-employment. In West Africa, however, this is beginning to change. Additionally, the ILO's 2010 Youth Employment Report notes that, while unemployment is relatively high across Africa, the degree of underemployment and working poverty is even greater, thus pointing to a lack of adequate job opportunities for youth.

Despite the existence of an enabling environment for addressing issues affecting the youth like any other country in Africa and even the world, the Kenyan Ministry of state for youth affairs is not an exceptional in that unemployment has remained one of the most doubting challenge in Kenya's social- economic development process for most of the post - independence period. The employment rate in Kenya was last reported at 40% in 2011. Historically, from 1999 until 2011, Kenya unemployment rate averaged 22. 4300 percent reaching an all-time high of 40. 000 percent in December 2011 and recorded low of 12. 7000% in December 2006.

The unemployment rate can be defined a number of people actively looking for a job as a percentage of the labour force Change in unemployment depend mostly on inflows made up of non-employment people starting to look for jobs, of employed people who lose their jobs and look for employment. Related terms are the labour force, the participation rate and the employment rate.

Youth Unemployment statistics in Kenya show that 60% of the Kenyan population is under the age of 30 The Kenyan unemployment rate is

approximately 40% of unemployed Kenyan youth. It is therefore not uncommon to find young people idling on the pavements or sited in groups with nothing to do. Unemployment has led to the soaring crime rate among the youth in the country. Furthermore idle youth have been used by unscrupulous politicians from time to time to cause chaos or start gangs that terrorize people.

### Causes of youth unemployment in Kenya

(a)Rapid population growth of youth graduating from different institutions. Increase in the number of youth graduating from different institutions coupled with decline in death rate due to improvement in nutrition and in health services has resulted into rapid growth rate in youth population. This simply means the youth population is growing at a faster rate than the rate at which the economy of the country is expanding. The work force entering the labor market therefore rises as faster than the economy's absorption capacity. (b)Inadequate co-operant factor input.

Kenya as a developing country has inadequate co-operant factors such as, capital and entrepreneurship and these are some of the factors of production that are needed by the youth for use in co-operation with labour in the process of production. Actually insufficiencies of these factors limit the scale a firm's operations and subsequent limitation in expansion of job opportunities for the energetic youth. (c)Use of inappropriate technology

Developing countries like Kenya have abundant labour supply. Despite this fact many of them opt to use capital intensive methods of production which limit the growth of employment opportunities of the youth. The following are

some of the factors which are responsible for this state of affairs. (i)Capital intensive methods are deemed to be more efficient compared to labour intensive methods in terms of quantity and quality output.

(ii)Capital intensive methods are preferred because they may be cheap. This may be true especially where the users are encouraged by the government through provision of generous tax and duty concessions. (iii)Relative high wage rate: Trade unions and government may set minimum wages at high levels that would discourage the employment. (d) Rural to urban migration

This refers to physical movement of people from rural to urban areas. It contributes to rural underdevelopment because the literate and energetic people, who would bring about technology progress and raise productivity, leave for towns. In urban areas, where they migrate to, they put tremendous pressure on the available resources while at the same time expanding the work force that cannot be absorbed by the labour markets in town.

(e)Inappropriate educational development

Education from most of our developing countries were adopted from developed world and they incline the youth towards white collar jobs and rural urban settling which does not match the realities of the labour market in these developing countries. In addition, the education system does not adequately equip the youth with knowledge and skill required in the labour market. This miss-match between the school leavers' skills and jobs requirements create unemployment to the youth.

(f)Seasonality in production

Seasonal variation creates youth unemployment in the economy of a country such that during the peak season, employment is high, and during off peak season, employment is low. Seasonal unemployment is more common in agricultural sector, tourism and travel business.

(g)Lack of product market

Producers are encouraged to produce more and more if what they produce is bought. Consumers on the other hand will be encouraged to buy more goods and services if they have substantial income. Demand deficiency is one of the causes of youth unemployment. When the economy slows down and business is cost to cut costs by reducing payroll expenses Completion in specific in specific industries or companies. Advanced technology, such as computers or robots, cause unemployment by replacing worker task with machine Job outsourcing this when accompany moves.

(h)Capacity under-utilization

Most firms tend to produce below their capacity, there by not employing as many people as their capable of. This arises due to lack of sufficient demand of their products. It can also be as a result of monopoly practice that limit output this can be solved by expanding the market through, for example export promotion and control of monopoly.

(i)Global economic recession

Recent global economic recessions have reduced the capacity of most economies to reduce employment. Kenya is not an exception to this. The problem can be solved through great international co-operation.



### (j) Imperfection in the labour market

There is imperfection in the labour market caused by government and trade unions interventions. This has tended to distort the Kenya market by maintaining minimum wages above the market equilibrium. As such the wage structure in Kenya has failed to co-ordinate demand and supply. This can be solved by allowing a free market mechanism to operate. This might require the wage out line.

### Effects/ Impacts of youth unemployment in Kenya

(a) Unemployment rates directly induces widespread of insecurity High unemployment rates induce widespread of insecurity within the Kenyan youth. Unemployment which is caused by many factors has a painful impact on both social matters and a countries economy

### Strategies of managing youth unemployment in Kenya

Youth represent 30 percent of Kenya's population and their unemployment is twice the country's average. Almost one third of Kenyans are between 15 and 29 years, and the total reached almost 11 million people in 2006 (compared to 8.5 million in 1999). According to the KPIA this age cohort is now at a historical high (in absolute and relation terms). Youth in Kenya face serious challenges, including high rates of unemployment and underemployment. The overall unemployment rate for youth is double the adult average, at about 21 percent. Statistics on joblessness suggest that the magnitude of the unemployment problem is larger for youth with 38 percent of youth

neither in school nor work (aggregating the rates of reported unemployment and inactivity).

The violence in early 2008 highlighted the critical importance of addressing the problem of poverty and inequality, and in particular the increasing problem of idle youth. In addition, the country Social Analysis (World Bank, 2007) found that youth unemployment, especially among males, is a major contributor to frustration and tension, particularly in urban areas. Clearly, unemployment among the youth has now become a matter of serious policy concern in the country.

Evidence from previous analytical work, shows that lack of action on the challenges that affect youth will escalate both social and economic costs of development in Kenya. This situation became clear during the crisis that erupted after the disputed December 2007 elections. Youths were the main group involved in the unrest and violence and they were identified by both the Government of Kenya (GoK) and Development Partners as a high priority target group for addressing some of the major challenges facing the country.

The recent financial and economic crisis has prompted the GoK to renew its commitment to addressing youth issues and youth unemployment has emerged as a top priority. The GoK developed a strategy to address youth unemployment in 2007, emphasizing the importance of a coordinated and multi-sectorial approach in addressing the problem of youth unemployment and youth under-activity. In April 2009 the Kazi Kwa Vijana (KKV) Program was launched, aiming at employing youth in rural and urban areas in labor - intensive public works projects implemented by different line ministries.

The KKV program is implemented under the overall supervision and guidance of a National Steering Committee chaired by the Prime Minister and comprising Ministers and Permanent Secretaries with KKV sub-projects. The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) is in charge of the overall coordination and monitoring. Priority is given to sub-projects that can be implemented rapidly using labor intensive techniques such as road maintenance sub-projects, small-scale water supply and sanitation sub-projects, water harvesting sub-projects, afforestation sub-projects and waste collection. In addition to the KKV, the GoK continues to support the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF), established in 2006, providing youth with access to finance for self-employment activities and entrepreneurial skills development.

The GoK has successfully launched the KKV, but as the program approaches the second phase, there is need to improve its effectiveness and efficiency. The World Bank is well positioned to help the GoK do this. The World Bank has worldwide experience in best practice operational features of public works program and will, together with the International Labour Organization (ILO), provide important technical skills to improve the efficiency of the KKV.

The support will strengthen the institutional arrangements for the program and further development of some operational features. This includes improved targeting mechanisms, optimization of employment content of sub-projects, the inclusion of services and effective monitoring and evaluation. Given that employment programs, particularly labor intensive public work programs for youth, are likely to be needed in the medium term, there is need for the GoK to master the management of these programs and

to develop a design that allows for flexibility based on demand, with possible scaling-up and scaling-down as necessary.

World Bank support will ensure increased community participation in the sub-project selection which will lead to greater ownership and stronger sustainability. The GoK allocation is Ksh. 6. 6 billion to the KKV for FY10 (around 84 million USD). In addition to improved operational features, the World Bank will support the expansion of the KKV into youth training and internship with the private sector to ensure more sustainability for this support.

Training available to youth often lacks a close link with the competencies sought by employers. Engaging the private sector in providing employment and training will improve the relevance of the training offered to youth and promote their future employability. Employers will need to be closely involved in the design of this activity and the targeting of youth participants. This expansion will hopefully result in increasing the employability of youth and will provide a basis for a possible nation-wide program.

How does unemployment affect the economy?

How does unemployment affect the economy?

Some of the well-known effects of unemployment on the economy are:  
Unemployment financial costs The government and the nation suffer. The government has to pay the unemployed youth some benefits. The greater the number of the unemployed or the longer they are without work the more money the government has to shell out. Therefore, the nation not only has to

deal with the lost income and decreased production but also with additional cost. Spending power

The spending power of an unemployed youth and his/her family decreases drastically and they would rather save than spend their money, which in turn affects the economy adversely. Reduced spending power of the employed

Increased taxes and the insecurity about their own work may affect the spending power of the working people as well and they too may start to spend less than before thus affecting the economy and also the society in a negative manner.

### Recession

With the increase rates of youth unemployment other economy factors are significantly affected, such as: the income per person, health costs, quality of health-care, standard of living and poverty. The effect of unemployment on our society

Unemployment affects not just the youth but also his/her family and in the long run the society where he lives. Unemployment brings with it despair, unhappiness and anguish. It forces the youth to live their lives in a way they do not wish to - The life expectancy is negatively affected. Life expectancy is the ease by which people living in a time/place are able to satisfy their needs/wants. Here are the main aspects: Mental health: Mental health problems like: Low self-confidence, feeling unworthy, depression and hopelessness. With the lost income and the frustration involved in it, the

recently unemployed may develop negative attitudes toward common things in life and may feel that all sense of purpose is lost.

Frequent emotions could be - low self-esteem, inadequateness and feeling dejected and hopeless. Tension at home: youth and parents' quarrels and arguments at home front may lead to tension and increased numbers of misunderstandings in families. Tension over taxes rise: Unemployment also brings up discontent and frustration amongst the tax paying citizens. In order to meet the demands of the unemployment fund the government many a times may have to increase the taxes thus giving way to restlessness amongst the tax paying citizens. Insecurity amongst employees: The prevailing unemployed youth and the plight of the their families may create fear and insecurity even in the currently employed people.

Crime and violence: Increase in the rate of crime is defiantly an issue in this case in that youth will opt to steal to sustain their lives Stigma: Unemployed youth brings with more than just ' no work'. It also brings with it the disgrace that the youth has to bear. Nobody likes to be termed as unemployed.

Standard of living: In times of unemployment the competition for jobs and the negotiation power of the youth decreases and thus also the living standard of people with the salaries packages and income reduced.

Employment gaps: To further complicate the situation the longer the youth is out of job the more difficult it becomes to find one. Employers find employment gaps as a negative aspect. No one wants to hire a youth who has been out of work for some time even when there's no fault of the youth per say. Lose of skills' usage: The unemployed youth is not able to put

his/her skills to use. And in a situation where it goes on for too long the youth may have to lose some of his/her skills

1. When the breadwinner of a family loses his/her job, the entire family is adversely hit by 2. How Does Unemployment Affect Families?

3.

4. Loss of Financial Security

5. Unemployment of the earning member of the family suddenly brings a lot of changes in the lives of family members. Sudden loss of financial security creates a lot of tension and stress in the family. The regular expenditures done by the family members before, suddenly have to be reduced or stopped due to altered financial capacity. It becomes really difficult for every member to adjust to this change. Searching for alternative sources of income becomes a necessity for the family to survive in such a condition. 6.

7. Reduced Disposable Income

8. As unemployment sets in, the disposable income of the family is drastically reduced. All the major expenditures have to be cut down to adjust with little money the family is left with. With reduced purchasing ability, other expenditures including food items are highly affected. This leads to increased poverty, due to which the earning members have to go through a lot of hardship to meet the basic needs of the family.

9. Housing Issues

10. Issues related to housing also come up with job loss. The family may need to shift to another house with low rent because the one in which the family used to live before, may not suit their pockets now. Families living in

their own houses may face problems in paying the installments of home loans they might have taken to purchase their house. The overall lifestyle of the family is hampered due to housing-related issues. 11.

#### 12. Increased Susceptibility to Health Problems

13. Significant rise in health problems amongst family members is observed as they are deprived of healthy nutritious food due to negligible income. Poor financial health leaves the family with no money for treatment of diseases like diabetes, bronchitis, and other chronic illnesses which sometimes lead to fatal outcomes. Unemployment is also responsible for triggering depression and mental disturbances in jobless individuals.

14. The future of children in a family with unemployed parents might seem bleak. Poor financial capacity of parents lead to compromising on good education of their children. Due to inadequate education, fewer companies open their doors for hiring them, and this ultimately affects their social futures. The emotional well-being of children is also hampered due to constant stress and conflicts between their parents and other family members. 15.

#### 16. Social Nonacceptance

17. Unemployment also affects social acceptance of families. Children of unemployed parents are generally not considered at par with children of employed parents. Wives of jobless men find it difficult to find jobs for themselves. Moreover, a single female parent also has less chances of getting a job easily, as the society rates a family depending on the number of earning members in it. 18.



### 19. Loss of Retirement Security

20. With job loss, the amount of money that is regularly set aside for use after retirement comes to a stop. This results in the loss of retirement security as the family has no money that is being accumulated to serve for expenditures after the earning members of the family retire. Long-term unemployment also reduces the chances of asset building and buying a home for old age. 21.

### 22. Emotional Disturbance

23. Money is very important to keep things going on smoothly. With less or no money in hand, the head of the family is under continuous stress which disturbs the emotional and physical health. Disturbed mental frame leads to frequent conflicts between the partners and this indirectly affects the mental framework of children in the family. Sometimes, children take this as a lesson and work hard to build a better future for themselves and in some cases, they accept it as their fate and do not put in the effort that is required to build a better future. 24.

### 25. Dependency on Government Welfare Programs

26. Government conducts welfare programs from time to time to help unemployed families. With increased dependency on such income sources, children may lose interest in earning a living, which may result in poor academic performances. Poor academics mean poor chances of employment in the future and this cycle may go on and on. Therefore, families with no income should think of alternative means to earn money so that children do not develop the tendency of relying on third-party help for survival. 27.

28. Handling unemployment can be extremely difficult. However, a person with a positive attitude and a peaceful mind can definitely find out ways to deal with unemployment, so that the entire family does not have to suffer too much most

## II. Why invest in young people?

The decision of policy makers to devote resources to facilitating the urban youth employment is most likely to take place as part of a national focus on poverty reduction. This may be as part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) process, or it may be related to the development of a strategy to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. There are also national strategies required for the national/regional Human Development Reporting, Common Country Assessments or reporting within the UN's Development Assistance Framework. (a) Giving young people their fair share of resources

The seven arguments suggested for policy makers in the UNFPA paper are outlined below. The most straightforward case for more focus on young people is a distributional one based on equity - young people's large share of the population in all developing and transition countries justifies providing them with their fair share of resources. This argument has the most weight where the country has a low per capita income. In these countries, the extent of extreme poverty that applies to the population as a whole also applies to each broad age group, albeit with some small margin for variation.

2

Annex 1 presents data on the countries with the largest share of young people in the population projected for the year 2005. Of the 102 countries

with 40 per cent or more young people aged 15 to 29 years, 50 of them are from the African continent. Of the 33 countries with a projected 50 per cent share of their population aged 15 to 29 years in 2005, 30 of them are from Africa. The total number of young people in these countries in Africa with the largest share of young people is projected to be 540 million.

The 10 African counties with the highest share of young people in 2005 are: Zimbabwe (59 out of 100 persons) Zambia, Swaziland, Burundi, Kenya, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Mali, Lesotho and Rwanda (54 out of 100 persons).

The 10 African countries with the largest number of young people are: Nigeria (130 million), Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Côte d'Ivoire, Angola, Mali, and Burkina Faso (14 million). (b)

#### Young people and the Millennium Development Goals

A rights-based argument presents a moral and legal basis for directing more resources to young people. This applies especially to the situation of girls and young women due to their great vulnerability to poverty. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) embody most elements of a human rights perspective by identifying the social and economic entitlements to development and the extent of disadvantage suffered.

Five Millennium Development Goals in particular can be identified as explicitly referring to young people. These goals cover activities in which mostly young people are engaged. The relevant goals relate to: education attainment, gender balance in education, improved maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis and decent employment opportunities for young people.

However, it needs to be said that more employment opportunities for young people is not a Millennium Development Goal in itself. Youth employment is seen as a by-product of Goal 8 of developing a Global Partnership for Development to 'develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth'. However, just who is responsible for achieving this target is not clear. The term 'Global Partners' could mean the governments of the rich countries, international corporations or indeed international agencies or some combination of these stakeholders.

#### (c) Economic benefits of investing in young people

Two arguments emphasising the medium-term benefits of investing in young people can also be made. The first relies on evidence of the macro economic benefits. This refers to the virtuous circle of investing in the health and education of children and then building on this investment in the adolescent years to consolidate the initial investment. A micro economic argument can also be made about the economic returns from investment in specific types of programs. The evidence for the microeconomic case is based on cost effectiveness data to work out which interventions are likely to have the greatest impact. (d) Young people as vulnerable

A common question from the policy maker is why should young people require special attention ahead of other age groups? The response to this question is to point to the difficulties many young people place in their transition to adulthood. This argument uses a dynamic view of poverty which highlights the vulnerabilities that many young people with easily identifiable characteristics have.

From the perspective of the 'capable poor', young people are active agents who are negotiators of the uncertainties they face. This perspective on poverty acknowledges first the importance of recognising the poor's different capacities to respond. It then looks to ways to reduce an individual's or a group's exposure to adverse outcomes. One way to do this is through setting up social protection mechanisms to allow the most vulnerable, as individuals or in association with others, to manage risk better. These policies can vary from providing better access to opportunities to upgrade skills to offering easier access to credit. Other policies include setting up mutual health insurance schemes or social insurance schemes to smooth out income flows as one way to cope with the unexpected. 3

(e) Long term benefits available

Two Arguments to emphasise the long-term benefits of investing in young people can be offered. One is the value to the economy and society of taking advantage of a country's demographic transition to lower population growth. Recent demographic analysis has shifted from a focus on population growth per se to looking more closely at the importance of a population's evolving age structure and its implication for development.

4 This new analysis suggests that as the relative size of each age group in a population changes, so does the relative impact of their economic activity on a country's economy. Large potential benefits are available in particular to a country currently with a large youth population but with future age cohorts becoming smaller in size due to fertility decline. This has been called the demographic bonus or dividend.

The achievement of this demographic bonus also requires not only good public sector policies, such as a comprehensive youth and social sector policy, as well as health and education policies. It also requires of governments good fiscal discipline as well as efforts to promote efficient functioning markets. Conversely, lack of investment by the public and private sectors will result in high levels of unemployment and health, education, and social welfare systems will experience unbearable strains as the large working age population gets older. 5 (f) Young people as a liability

The final argument I offer is likely to have particular appeal to risk-averse policy makers. It is based on improving national security by lowering the chances of young people engaging in violent criminal activity. Young people are both disproportionately responsible for violent crime and are also more likely than other age groups to be the victims of such crime. The behaviour of some young males in particular may be a major source of urban insecurity. Male youth homicides are high in Latin America, the USA and the transition economies.

A large youth share of the total adult population historically has been associated with political violence and the overthrow of governments. It has been noted that the English Revolution of the seventeenth century, the French revolution of the eighteenth century and most twentieth-century upheavals in developing countries have occurred when exceptionally large youth bulges in the population were present. 6 An increased risk of political violence often comes from an expanding population of higher-educated youth who are facing limited opportunities to obtain elite political and economic positions.

A poor country's chances of experiencing civil conflict have been linked to the size of its youth bulge in the population and its young people's lack of education and lack of access to jobs as a result. Countries with a high share of youth in their population are more likely to experience new armed conflict. Recently published analysis shows that where there is more than 40 per centaged 15 to 29 years, the country is 2.3 times more likely to experience an outbreak of civil conflict compared with countries with smaller youth shares. 8 The relative prevalence of young men in the adult population consistently accounts for more than one third of the variance in the severity of recent conflicts, despite taking into account a country's per capita income level and degree of inequality.

A greater chance of civil conflict for a poor country has also been linked to its young people's lack of education and access to jobs. Countries whose young people have low levels of participation in education are more likely, other things being equal, to be engaged in civil strife. According to World Bank research, the average country that experienced civil conflict during the period 1965 to 1999 had only 45 per cent of its young males in secondary education.

As young unemployed males are prime candidates for recruitment as soldiers in any civil disorder, the lower education participation of young males is associated with a higher propensity for internal conflict. Multivariate statistical analysis shows that a country with ten percentage points more of its young male population in secondary education, other things being equal, reduces its risk of civil conflict from 14 per cent to around 10 per cent. More education is only part of the answer. What is also needed are other forms of

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investment to create jobs to absorb those young people who have gone on to complete secondary schooling.

### III. Young people and PRSPs

One prominent way poverty reduction strategies are formulated is through the PRSP process. Most PRSPs refer to African countries. How do young people fare in the completed PRSPs? Recent evidence shows that an increasing number of PRSPs are making some reference to young people. However, there is also evidence that the initiatives are often piecemeal and, hence, limited in their scale and potential impact. A content analysis of the thirty-one Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers completed to September 2003 is reported on in Annex 2. The detailed results of the content analysis of 31 completed PRSPs to September 2003 are reported in Annex 2.

Just over half the PRSPs give some attention to youth in their action plans. However, the attention is often limited as few action plans state specific targets and budget outlays. 11 The good news, however, is that the focus on youth in PRSPs is improving over time. Nearly twothirds of the PRSPs completed between May 2002 and September 2003 give youth major attention in their action plans. The largest grouping (over a third) of initiatives for young people mentioned in the action plans refer to education, both formal and informal. This is followed by employment-related initiatives (under a third of all initiatives directed at young people).

Only a quarter of the action plan initiatives directed at youth refer to health issues. A small number of the remaining initiatives refer to other issues such



as the environment, population awareness and sport. More details on the employment related initiatives are provided below.

Another deficiency evident from close scrutiny of the completed PRSPs the widespread failure to treat youth issues as a major cross-cutting issue. Only 16 per cent of PRSPs view young people as a focus for integrated interventions. Providing an integrated approach rather than discrete, stand alone programs is a fundamental test of whether a PRSP addresses youth issues in a comprehensive way. Piecemeal or sole program interventions are not likely to deliver the range of benefits a comprehensive approach can.

#### IV. Programs for urban youth

I have been asked to identify the ' proven' elements of successful employment policies for the creation of urban youth employment? This includes highlighting good practices and the lessons learned from past efforts. The first difficulty I encountered in this exercise is locating information on initiatives related to youth employment. It is fair to claim that youth employment generation has not been a focus of governments, NGOs or international agencies.