

Researchers

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Sample Size

88 Villages

Research Implemented by IPA

Yes

Enterprise and Employment Growth: Youth Trainings and Mentorship in Tanzania

Abstract

Youth account for 60% of the unemployed in Africa. One approach to increasing employment among youth is to provide training and mentoring for young people to help them find jobs or start new businesses. This study evaluates the impact of a training and mentorship program with a robust long-term support component on Tanzanian youth's employment, entrepreneurial activities, and self-confidence.

Policy Issue

Youth unemployment is a challenge for many developing countries, and in sub-Saharan Africa, which has the world's youngest and fastest-growing population, it is particularly difficult. Youth account for 60% of the unemployed in Africa, and underemployment is an additional challenge: in sub-Saharan Africa, nine out of ten working youth are poor or near poor (globally, two thirds of youth can be categorized as working poor). In the long term, youth unemployment and underemployment may hinder economic growth, and lead to political and social unrest.

One approach to increasing employment among youth is to provide training and mentoring for young people to help them develop the skills they need to find employment or start new businesses. While rigorous research has not generally found returns to short training programs, longer or more intense programs with long-term follow-up may be more promising.

Context of the Evaluation

In 2011, TechnoServe launched the Strengthening Rural Youth Development through Enterprise (STRYDE) program to help young women and men in rural East Africa transition to economic independence. In the first phase of the program, STRYDE delivered a package of services including skills training, business development, and mentoring to young people ages 18 to 30 in Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. The second iteration of the program, STRYDE 2.0, builds on the first iteration by intensifying and lengthening participants' engagement with the program. STRYDE 2.0 launched in the Mbeya region of Tanzania in 2016.

Tanzania has a young population: two-thirds of Tanzanians are younger than 25 years old, and the median age in the country is 18 (the global median age is 30). Tanzania's youth population almost doubled from 4.4 million in 1990 to 8.1 million in 2010; it is expected to reach 11 million by 2020 and 15 million by 2030. Even youth who are employed, however, often hold precarious jobs in the agricultural sector, without formal contracts or benefits.

Details of the Intervention

Researchers are working with Innovations for Poverty Action and TechnoServe to conduct a randomized evaluation assessing the impact of the STRYDE 2.0 program on youth employment, psycho-social adjustment, and entrepreneurial knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Researchers randomly assigned 88 communities in the Mbeya region to either be in a comparison group or be invited to participate in TechnoServe's STRYDE 2.0 program.

Participants will attend a three-month intensive training, in which TechnoServe staff will teach life, technical, and financial skills. This component of the program is meant to foster an increase in participants' self-efficacy by focusing on developing their communication, time management, and financial management skills.

After participants complete training, they will enter the "aftercare" phase of the program, which lasts for a further nine months. During this time, business councilors from TechnoServe will connect youth with potential employers and/or support them in the creation and execution of entrepreneurial business plans.

The evaluation will assess the impact of the STRYDE 2.0 program on a range of outcomes, including participants' income, savings, entrepreneurial knowledge and activities, employment, and psycho-social adjustment.

Researchers, IPA, and TechnoServe are discussing additional research designs that could allow researchers to evaluate the impact of the aftercare program, or one of its components, such as a business plan competition or technical assistance fund.

Results and Policy Lessons

Results forthcoming.

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