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Nurturing Career Development for Human Resource Sustainable Development

Decent Work and Economic Growth – Encyclopedia of the UN Sustainable Development Goals

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SYNONYMS

Career Development – synonymous words include:

- *Career*
- *Vocation*
- *Occupation*
- *Career behaviour.*

DEFINITION(S)

There are myriad of definitions associated with the phrase ‘**Career Development**’ (see Egan et al, 2006: pp. 457 – 467) and in this chapter, we have limited highlights to couple as outlined below:

- *“Career development is a lifelong, continuous process of developing and implementing a self concept, testing it against reality, with satisfaction to self and benefit to society” (Super, 1957: p. 282).*
- *“Career development is a balancing operation-recognizing and meeting the needs of the individual while recognizing and responding to outer forces and a lifelong process of working out a synthesis between the self and the reality, opportunities and limitations of the world” (Kroll, Dinklage, Lee, Morley, & Wilson, 1970: p.17).*
- *“Career development focuses on the alignment of individual subjective career aspects and the more objective career aspects of the organization in order to achieve the best fit between individual and organizational needs as well as personal characteristics and career roles” (Boudreaux, 2001:p. 805).*
- *“Career development is the total constellation of psychological, sociological, educational, physical, economic and chance factors that combine to shape the career of an individual over the life span” (Sears, 1982: 139; Herr, 2011: 196; also excerpted in Patton and McMahon, 2014: 7).*
- *“Career development ... connotes a continuous stream of career-relevant events that are not necessarily linear or positive in impact and that may or may not be subject to personal agency (e.g., being born into poverty, losing a job due to the bankruptcy of one’s company)” (S. D. Brown & Lent, 2013; also excerpted in Patton and McMahon, 2014: 7).*

All the definitions highlighted above have (directly or indirectly) stressed the importance of career development as being a lifelong process geared towards enhancing and preparing people for opportunities that may be used to capacitate easy sustainable means of livelihood. Though not fully exhaustive, the need for career development as addressed in the definitions is to develop / capacitate the self in pursuit of decent work for both present and future generations.

INTRODUCTION: HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

With reference to a popular quotation from Winston Churchill - "Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts" (Langworth, 6th May, 2019).

Career development is an important part of every individual's endeavour(s), which can be pursued through formal or informal means; it is considered the most important element needed to assist mankind forge ahead with planned objectives. Indeed, based on Churchill's expressed quotation, the process of career development can be a tough but rewarding endeavour, particularly for those people who are not considered to be born with '*silver spoon*' or coming from a home perceived as affluent.

The term career development is construed as synonymous with '*career behaviour*'; it is rooted as far back in antiquity of the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century when human endeavours were geared towards pursued ventures around work related activities, mostly associated with class or caste as it were at that time (Dumont and Carson, 1995). It is believed that the combined phrase '*career and development*' was not as commonly used neither in 1950s nor in the early part of the 1960s, but such combination of phrase into its modern coinage, "*career development*" started gaining prominence in the late 1960s. The use of the phrase has evolved in becoming a globalised terminology, which is used alongside words like '*profession and vocation*', and this to a greater extent is reflected in the social, political and economic landscape of human dynamic endeavours.

There are many theories linked to the concept of career development. Herr and Cramer (1992) identified eight different groupings of career development and these include "*Trait and factor, Actuarial or matching, Decision, Situational or sociological, Psychological, and developmental*". Within these eight groupings, Herr and Cramer (1992) explained the non-mutual exclusivity or non-independence of the highlighted theories, while it is perceived as a mere attempt to differentiate behaviours emanating from career ventures. In a latter study, Herr (ibid) again presented a case of two different theoretical / conceptual categories of the term career development; firstly, it explain the development of career behaviour across the human lifespan and secondly, describe how career behaviour can be changed through intervention(s); these two can also be attributed to content and process means of historical categorisation of the phrase, Career Development (Patton and McMahon, 2014: 13). On the basis of this, one could simply link its theoretical root into the need for vocational guidance / counselling support, which started in the USA, around the late nineteenth to early part of the twentieth centuries (Herr, 2001). This shift was perpetrated by demand for changes that were taking place on account of spillages from Europe to the USA, given emerging transformation from agriculture to that which was attributed to the rise of industrial revolution. In association with the second theoretical or conceptual category, which relates to human interventions, it is perceived to be an expanded diversification of occupational needs due to an emerging access to wider pool of job opportunities as urban cities were beginning to expand on account of growing industrial processes that were taking place.

STAGES OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

In view of the need to strive towards being empowered, the process of career development would normally be expected to go through different stages and incorporating the undermentioned concepts (Business Jargons, n/d):

- **Growing-** this is considered the starting point of a human career development adventure and it is expected to take place during the early part of life, for example between the ages of 4 - 13 years. It is characterised by self-awareness, linked with the need to be involved in tasks, and the expectation of accomplishing set goal(s). Normally, the growing stage is construed as a form of mentor scheme, geared towards supporting users who may not be necessarily aware about the importance of career development for lifelong achievement. In this regard, the mere support provided can be viewed as a form of brainstorming process and in which case, early career aspirants can explore available opportunities at their disposal. In the case for those with inherent skills-set, this will also provide a means of championing further access to opportunities, which in some cases can be in the form of financial support or training to empower talents.
- **Exploring-** this is prominent around the mid teenage stage to mid-20's of a human lifetime. There is a need at this stage to be more thoughtful about subject specific or vocational aspiration that is considered useful for professional achievement(s). More specifically, it is possible that people would receive mentorship in the form of apprenticeship / cadet schemes normally available in developed economies like the UK to support young people in finding their way through traineeship programs for future engagements and self-empowerment (CIPD, February 2017). This is considered to be very well fitted as part of the SDG8 and 10 agendas, which addresses decent work and economic growth in society and as well as reducing inequality constraints for those considered to be under-privileged.
- **Establishing-** this is focused on the human aspirational goal of job hunting or even the self fulfilment of gaining specific qualification(s), be it at a degree level or professionally recognised certifications like those relating to the accountancy / architectural professions. In developed economies like the UK and the USA, planning for the future (World Economic Forum, 2018) has made it such that graduates are also able to benefit from mentorship schemes, which also assist them in being placed through career development routes like apprenticeship (equal opportunities scheme), while also ensuring those engaged are well placed in a decent program of their choice, perceived as being beneficial to the individual and as well as to the state in the form of reduction in unemployment rate and increased revenues from PAYE taxes.
- **Maintaining-** this is connected with stock taking given that most people would have already achieve minimum level of qualification / skills as a guaranteed for job opportunities in the open market, There is also the need for self-fulfillment, with the benefit of diversifying skills that would add competitive value to people's ability for sustainable living. With the advancement in technology and the risk of business fluctuations, there is an inherent tendency for people to be very well prepared through diversified skills-set to take advantage of the dynamic world of work. One way in which this can be done is through supplementary skills in ICT, while still gainfully employed in a particular area of professional endeavour.
- **Reinventing-** this is concerned more with those considered to be almost at retirement, but given the advancement of the digital economy, it is still possible that the human mindset may still be pondering about reinventing skill-set to incorporate some level of teaching or something

worth giving back to others what had being learned through the formative years of an individual's life time. Even if such endeavour is not for financial gains, there is some form of inherent tendency to get involved in volunteering or even diverting attention to providing remote support of some sort, which would mean that skills gained are transformed into supporting people far and wide in the globalise community through accessible digital technological means.

In spite of the above description of the stages of career development, it is possible that the situation may not be the same for every individual based on circumstances, which might prevent a person's active involvement in all five stages as chronologically outlined. Constraints attributed to non-participation into the five fitted stages may include financial limitations or circumstances around poverty and also poor health situation. In most cases, the individual may not be intellectually capacitated to achieve a perfectly fitted career as chronologically outlined and hence, may have to do something lower, but this may not necessarily prevent them from being self-fulfilling in their efforts to become career minded or achieving set career plans.

ROADMAP CYCLE FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND PRACTICALITIES FOR REAL WORLD OF HUMAN EMPOWERMENT

Career development venture is a process and in fact as identified by Chen (1998; 444), it is viewed as a form of individual agency, which is non-existent without human involvement. It is mostly left with people to set personal goals, even though it may not be possible for everyone to be fitted into the same model of the five stages of career development roadmap cycle as described below. Mostly, the scope for an individual to achieve planned dream(s) about career goal can easily be accomplished through collaboration through support of a career coach or someone in the capacity of being a mentor, which is a common practice in developed economies, where people are provided with career guidance support from as early as in secondary school stage. Based on research carried out at the Simmons University (n/d), the roadmap cycle for career development can be classified into five distinct areas as identified below (some other research activities carried out may incorporate more or fewer roadmap cycle stages, but the underlying thoughts may revolved around the same notion):

- **Assessment** (Getting to Know yourself): This is the starting point for someone to identify personal values, interests, skills, personality traits or something worth considering for future endeavour. The use of personality assessment is normally recommended at this point in an individual's life, but the question here is that, *'Is it worth it for every individual to be placed through a form of self-assessment route'*. There is a critical contention here as it can be considered too early for assessment to be done on young teenagers who do not actually know exactly what life owe them in advance. On a positive note, it can be a good way of getting the individual (be it young as a teenager or a middle aged person) to realise the possibility of their efforts, which need to start from somewhere and it is considered a lifelong learning process. In this case, it is possible that an initial assessment may help people to decipher options and from which they would be able to identify unique area of career interest. At this point, it is possible that people may consider to start building up a resume, in which case relevant experiences (paid and unpaid) can be incorporated, with information like skills achievement and also education status incorporated.

- **Exploring and choosing options:** this is a considered research option route, where the individual is made to make connections with academic life (whether at school or university level) and experiences already gained, with a future career route. This is a very important step as it provide people with the necessary tools to explore various means through which a considered career choice can be achieved. In fact, networking with others in a similar area of interest is highly recommended as through this means, people might be able to share experiences in relation to a present state of professional achievement. The stage of exploration do not necessarily have to be an academic venture, but more so a combination of vocational endeavour that provide people with the possibility of venturing into career development route that involve personal satisfaction.
- **Preparation (Developing resume):** On completion of the exploration stage, it is possible for people to prepare themselves to think through the development of a well planned resume or curriculum vitae. This should be well researched as employers would be very much keen in viewing resume that outline information in a chronological manner, with experiences listed and identified in a way that demonstrate work experiences (paid or unpaid) and in addition, incorporating other components that the individual may have achieved throughout their lifetime. While it is very important that a resume is developed, it is also a very important stage for the individual to consider practicing relevant skills of presenting information, which include writing letter(s) for job application and also, presentation at interviews. This is as equally good as having a perfectly documented CV / resume as employers would normally assess people to make sure that information presented on paper can be defended when it comes to discussing or explaining about career work-life. In most cases, it would be good that preparation is done well in advanced, through practice or coaching so as to make sure ideas are very well presented (verbally) to convince a would-be employer. A career action plan is very much recommended here and this should identify specific competencies like *'Communication, Leadership, Teamwork and Professionalism / Work Ethics'* (Simmons University, n/d).
- **Implementation:** This stage involve actions that needs to be taken and a time for prospective candidate / employee to venture in search of a specific career / work activities they have invested their time to develop. Equally, it is very important that the resume and also competency skills identified are used effectively to convince prospective employers about the need to be appointed or considered for a specific task or job. Network is very important here and as well as ensuring attendances at career work related events are booked to address specific requirements in line with experience and qualifications gained.
- **Decision Making:** [Putting the jig-saw together]: This is viewed as the stage of firming up on decisions relating to career programs. It is possible that the art of negotiation will need to be developed or unearthed here after efforts will have been devoted in planning for future career ventures. Being part of a network is something worth considering at the decision making stage as it is the point that people would be expected to face the world of work and also, tested on the basis of relevant competencies identified at the preparation stage. Universities in developed economies like the UK are more receptive when it comes to supporting students, more so those in their final year in planning their resume and preparation for interviews. The need to incorporate career services is now becoming an essential part of higher education institutions focus in terms of sustaining efforts to prepare students for the world of work. An effort in this direction was proposed by Yorke & Knight (2004, p.14; Watts, 2006) as a preferred way of enhancing institution's contribution to students' employability, but this needs to be done

through curriculum presence, that is, linking career services in institutions with courses that have vocational mandatory elements. Through this, it is possible that efforts will have been stepped up by staff in the career advisory service / centres to help prepare students from the commencement of their studies on to the point at which they are ready to make decision(s) about specific job opportunities.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT LINK WITH THE SDGs

In pursuit of nurturing career development programs for the sustainability of human endeavours, the identified four Sustainable Development Goals [*SDG4 (Quality Education)*, *SDG5 (Gender Equality)*, *SDG8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)* and *SDG10 (Reducing Inequalities)*] are considered very important in promoting human lifelong endeavours for the development of both present and future generations (UNDP, n/d). It is believed that poverty is a phenomenon that is highly linked to poor career planning or goals set by people across the world; the situation seem to be worse in regions around Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), and some areas in Southern Asia and Latin America. The need to promote lifelong learning is key towards self-empowerment and in this situation, the provision of access to opportunities for training / career development, which are not necessarily formal means of education is very important to raise human esteem and confidence in pursuance of their sustained livelihoods, be it in the present or in anticipation about future opportunities.

Equally, the need to ensure women of all backgrounds are empowered to improve their opportunities in society is very important given the fact that they are mostly found in unpaid domestic-related jobs, which in many cases are not recognised as part of an achieved means towards societal developmental processes. The derogatory usage of the word “*Informal Employment*“ is mostly synonymously linked to the nature of free services women provide in the homes, more so associated with words like underground world of work by political activist working against the interest of pursued endeavours in the informal economy sector (Jackson, forthcoming).

All across the world, there is a need for SDGs to be integrated as part of professional and organisational strategic objective(s) prepared by institutions of all types (EY Global, 2017). The use of the phrase career development is closely associated with the economic management of a nation; institutions like central banks have been seen to take central role in capacitating workforce in the hope of achieving their core objective(s), which include price stability for the majority and financial stability for others; this could be seen as a key component in averting risk[s] posed to both national and global economies on account of experiences witnessed during the global financial crisis that surfaced between 2007/09 (Warburton and Jackson, forthcoming). In this vein, such institution will continue invest in staff so as to capacitate their knowledge in building a sound economy, through scope for economic model construction helps in identifying risks in areas pertaining to sound financial and economic management of a nation. The pursuance of career development venture(s) as perceived in this case with such a pivotal institution [Central Banks] can be construed as a lifelong process given the prevalence of continued risks of perturbation faced by economies, both at national and global level.

Career development venture is a process that is of critical concern by leaders and institutions around the world. The situation in developed economies around Europe and also the USA have made great strides and are continuing to explore ways of improving opportunities for citizens through career routes like Apprenticeship and Internship. A research carried out in Greece, regarded as having one of the highest unemployment rate for young people in the EU area shows the importance of co-operative education in serving as a vehicle for linking theoretical knowledge and practice, and also enhancing student employability upon graduation (Mihail, 2006). As a sustainable means of enhancing the human prospect for opportunities in society, co-operative education that seeks to address wider pool of career opportunities through schemes like Internship or placement for students as early as in secondary schools are considered good for society, particularly so in creating decent means of work opportunities and also the prospect for long term economic growth in an economy. As already mentioned in association with SGDs 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10, such scheme developed in partnership between universities and employers can provide opportunity for increasing students' prospects for work in the Greece economy to gain valuable skills given the fierce competition that the Greek economy face in the EU area, while also enhancing equality of opportunities through self-empowerment.

In terms of forging ahead with career development discourse(s), more so its link with the SDGs, the relevance of work-based learning can be an excellent means for driving sustainability of human resource development in the 21st Century (See Wall and Hindley, 2018; Wall et al, 2017). Work-based (learning) route to career development planning is quite common in developed economies like the UK; its extension across continental boundaries / regions can equally be an excellent means for building resilient infrastructure and fostering innovation, while also reducing barriers to inequality (Jabbie et al, forthcoming; also, as addressed in SDGs 9 and 10) faced by people who may not have been fortunate to gain formal education through the normal route of formal university entrance. It is considered very relevant for all areas of career development endeavours, rather than the common approach to academic career route, which in itself can be seen as reductive in addressing human equality. More positively, career development for human Sustainable Development is becoming a global agenda, more so for work-based programs that require people to engage in a form of flexible learning course either at an institution based in their home country or from a distance with an institution that is in another country (Wall and Tran, 2015). In the current information, such flexibility can be aided through the use of dedicated learning platforms like Moodle / Blackboard as used in many developed economies to support learning within and outside of the formal learning environment (Jackson, 2017 and Jackson, 2015).

The global education monitoring report 2018 stated that 'Education should be a solution to the burning injustice in the world' (UNESCO, 2018). This means that educational provision in the world must consider the needs of every society in terms of natural resources, culture, individual needs, society needs and finance, which will lead to sustainability and economic growth. This paper argues that global public goods in education – such as internationally comparable data and statistics, basic research addressing the challenge of improving learning outcomes for sustainable development, and networks for peer learning, which include apprenticeship and other vocational provisions – are in short supply, poorly funded and rarely coordinated. It calls on the international community to develop a joint vision and finance their provision sustainably to alleviate major constraints to achieving Education 2030 targets.

Emphasis must not only be put on the all expensive academic route, in the developed world, but also the vocational and due consideration must be on cost, relevance to society and economic growth. For example, the cost of the UK undergraduate degree is very high and unaffordable to cross-section of society. The current system is only affordable to upper- and middle-class families. As a result of this the UK had incorporated Apprenticeship and internships and other vocational provisions in the UK Education system.

The Philip Augar report which was published on 30th May 2019, highlighted the need for lower tuition fees for post 18 provisions (cap at 7,500 from 9,250) and increasing the number of years for payment from 30 to 40 years, and the provision of high quality Apprenticeships and other vocational provisions, which will contribute to self-reliance, prospect for decent work and economic growth.

From the perspective of Social Work, particularly with children and young people aged 0-18years in public care in the United Kingdom, career development, also a form of lifelong learning can be seen as an international variable. As such, it is possible to transfer ideas from the UK to other areas of the world. The children and young people that are cared for by local authorities in the UK are usually referred to as looked after children (LAC), though a number of young children and young people, including the authors do not like the term (LAC).

Like children living at home with their parents, each local authority, commonly referred to as the corporate parent has a duty to work with other agencies and professionals to ensure the children in their care are supported to meet their general health, social developmental and educational outcomes, which in this case can be seen as career development plans. Irrespective of whether a child or a young person is in the care system or not, Article 29 (1) of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) expressed that “States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to (UNCRC, Online):

“(a) The development of the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

“(b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

“(c) The development of respect for the child’s parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

“(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

“(e) The development of respect for the natural environment.”

In light of the above, the UK government and every other government has a role to play in fostering relevant and good standard of educational curriculum [incorporating vocation and academic] that would not only impact on the general development of the children and young people that would be accessing institutions of learning, from nursery to university, but such curriculum must also be made accessible to young people in different parts of the global world, in a bid to developing their

prospect for sustained economic, social and cultural development. However, Dixon (2009) cautions about the understanding of the implications of the usage of the word global village.

It is incumbent on the education establishments and other agencies to work very well together in order to put all aspects of the theme of this paper, Nurturing Career Development for Human Resource Sustainable Development, into fruition. In 2014, the general assembly of the international Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) approved the following global definition of Social Work: “Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing”, which in this case can be perceived as the creation of appropriate career development opportunities for young people, irrespective of where they live (IFSW, 2014). In line with this definition, social workers are seen as good collaborators, who pulled their professional experiences to work closely with agencies and professionals in order to support the children and young people they work with and in this case, creating the enabling scope for their access to relevant career development programmes that would help them function effectively wherever they are in the world.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 points out why ‘quality education’ matters, not just education. Sustainable Development Goal 4 indicates that, “Education is the key that will allow many other sustainable development goals to be achieved. When people are able to get quality education they can break from the cycle of poverty. Education therefore helps to reduce inequalities....” Likewise, Nick Gibb (09/07/2015) a UK Minister for Schools concludes that, “There are three purposes of education: empowering young people to succeed in the economy, participate in culture, and leave school prepared for adult life.”

In light of the above discussion, whether children and young people are brought up in the UK, India, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, the US or China, the goal of education, which seek to champion career development is the same. It helps them to acquire relevant skills they could use to access employment, which in effect should help them enjoy their lives, become good citizens of their countries and the global community. Therefore, the goal of career development appears to be very closely linked to the Sustainable Development, which in this case will help to enhance the opportunity for decent and sustained standard of living.

WAY FORWARD / CONCLUSION

Career development is a lifelong process that should be part and parcel of everyone's life. In the process of nurturing career development for human sustainable endeavour, it should be noted that the process can be a costly venture for people, communities and as well as the state. To make it worthwhile as a sustainable venture on a global scale, the following action points are worth considered by individuals, institutions and the state in ensuring that the pursued venture of capacitating people is one that will lead to sustained means of livelihood adventure, irrespective of the pathway used.

1. It must be made a point of duty by state authorities to set action points on how career development programs can be strategically targeted to address sustainable human development prospects in a country, while also averting the possibility of failed market system that inhibit the opportunity for citizens to be gainfully engaged in self-empowering programs that is sufficient to sustain lives (Jackson and Jabbie, 2019). In this regard, efforts must be made to robustly explore development plans in ensuring human skills are judiciously utilised to address global changes in the workforce. Therefore, education curriculum from as early as in the kindergarten stage may need to take account of targeting children's interests, for example in the direction of the five stages of career development, but most importantly, at the very early point of the '*Growing stage*'. In such a case, career development programs should be established all around to ensure children, particularly in pre-schools are given a chance of expressing an interest in a particular area of career development route; this may involve collaboration with specialised institutions or specialists by developing role-play activities to enthuse children's interests towards a particular professional field(s).
2. Moving into the *exploration* stage of career development endeavours, it is very crucial that adults who may not have had the opportunity of embarking on formal education are given a second chance to seek alternative route of vocational programs / schemes like "*apprenticeship*" already adopted in developed economies like the U.K (Stevens, 1999; Brockmann, Clarke and Winch, 2010); such program has faced intense criticism on account of its focus / direction, which to some extent, has not been clearly defined as to what constitute an apprenticeship scheme and in this case, there is shortfall of the level of educational component incorporated into the scheme and also that, it is also perceived as lacking recognition of alternative college-based route (Brocmann, Clarke and Winch, 2010: p. 111). If managed very well, this can yield fruitful outcomes given its link to Sustainable Development Goal 10, which addresses issues of inequalities in an economy, while at the same time developing the human potential needed at a mid-20 stage to either diversify skills-set or gain specific skills needed to address livelihood concerns. In this vein, efforts may also have to rest on extensive government support and where necessary, establishing collaborative partnership with corporate organisations to ensure specialist training academies / institutions are created to address sustainable human development capacity.
3. Higher education institutions across the world must be prepared to establish relevant opportunities for students to face the world of work. In this vein, there is a need for investment to be devoted to improving career counselling or support services to ensure students receive relevant skills-set to face the world of work. Given the development in technology, there is a need for people to gain relevant information and communication technology skills that are considered relevant for the world of work. In this case, higher education institutions would need to invest resources to support students and if necessary, develop extra-curricular module(s) to capacitate students to face the fierceness of competition in the open world of job market; viewed as a very contentious proposal by many left-wingers (Fuller and Unwin, 2010) and if managed very well, will be very rewarding to communities at large particularly in under-developed economies around the Sub-Saharan African region.

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- Inclusive Employment
- Informal Employment / Economy

- Poverty Reduction

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