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Enhancing youth Employment Opportunities in Rural Economies in Benin

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Abstract

In Sub-Saharan Africa, unemployment statistics have increased in recent years and this situation largely affects young people who already represent more than 60% of the population. The number of young graduates looking for work continues to grow with a market that is not growing fast enough to accommodate them. Only very few manage to find a job corresponding to their abilities. These trends could worsen according to the predictions of the International Labor Office (ILO) given population growth.

This study was designed to assess measures likely to improve the employment situation of young people in rural Benin. The first concern, is to identify the different types of promising agricultural and non-agricultural jobs; secondly, to assess the factors favoring the employment of young people, favorable in terms of education, training networks and others necessary for youth employment actors to increase the chances of finding employment in targeted rural areas. The study was carried out in three phases (exploratory, qualitative and quantitative). For this study, a sample of 642 young people were interviewed in four departments of the countries. The main categories of young people (unemployed, employees and entrepreneurs) have been taken into account in the sample. Several methods of analysis have been used: descriptive statistics made it possible to compare the different groups based on appropriate statistical tests and econometrics methods. The binary and multinomial logit models have made it possible to assess the determinants of youth employment and types of jobs.

The results of the study showed that the agriculture is the sector with the most employment potential for young people in rural areas but which remains under-exploited according to the majority of the respondents. The results also highlighted that participation to training program on employment increase the chance to obtain a job, and the level of education mainly those who have high school diploma have more opportunity to get a job. With respect to the factors which control the type of employment, the results revealed that the age, level of education, participation in the training on job search and entrepreneurship training and the geographical situation had statistically significant effects in the differentiation between young employees and young people without employment. In addition, access to information on employment opportunities has a statistically significant effect on the status of self-employed and has thus helped to differentiate young entrepreneurs from unemployed young people. Solutions likely to favor the integration of young people in the sectors were suggested by the respondents. The main solution considered by respondents in the agricultural sector is to raise awareness among young people of the existing job opportunities in the sector. Most of them suggested the implementation of state measures that will facilitate the financing of young entrepreneurs.

Keywords: employment, opportunities, training, education, skills development.

Introduction

Global employment trends showed that unemployment rate was 5.6% in 2017 and represented 192.7 million unemployed with an increase of 2.6 million when compared to 2016 (ILO, 2018). About 70.9 million of them were estimated to fall within the youth category in 2017 (ILO, 2017). For the Group of Twenty (G20), better results in youth employment become a necessity. For example, in many of these countries' national plans, there are employment-related measures targeting young people (WBG and IFAD, 2017).

The situation is becoming worrisome in Africa, as the rate of unemployment is about 7.9% in 2017 (ILO, 2018). Increase in the rate of unemployment is expected, most especially in sub-Saharan Africa, due to the strong growth in the Labor force (ILO, 2018). If this condition is not addressed, the implication is, the population of African youth within the age of 15 and 24 years will be doubled by 2045 from 200 million reported in 2014 (Elder and SiakaKoné, 2014). Unemployment therefore, stands an issue of concern in developing countries and if attention is not paid, increase in insecurity and illegal activities is inevitable.

Despite the artistic initiatives of International communities and other notable initiatives in Africa such as the Action Program for Employment and the Reduction of Poverty adopted by the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union held in Ouagadougou in September 2004, the situation has not improved. Informal or vulnerable jobs remain the reality for the vast majority of young workers in sub-Saharan Africa (Elder and SiakaKoné, 2014). The possibility of having a secure job, combined with the rising educational attainment, access to modern technology and information is low, leading to frustration among youth which can result into political instability and emigration (Elder and SiakaKoné, 2014). The Arab Spring is a clear proof that showed how much unemployment and exclusion of young people constitute a real "bomb" and a destabilizing factor with negative effects in the short and medium term on economic and social performance, thus affecting development.

Benin, a country in sub-Saharan Africa, is not exempted from this situation, it has a high rate of young people. Youth between the age group of 15 and 29 years accounted for 23.3% of the total population (INSAE, 2013). However, their involvement in the Labor market is about 30.4% and relatively low (INSAE, 2013). This youth participation rate, although low, could be linked to the Government efforts towards Universal Primary School enrollment. According to the data from the Transition to Active Living Survey (ETVA), about half of young people (49.3%) aged 15 to 29 years are still in the education system. This effort is encouraging, as education is one of the pillars of sustainable development. Based on the ETVA conducted in 2012 reported by INSAE (2013) Benin had 78,973 unemployed persons within the age of 15 and 29 years, with youth unemployment rate of 9.1%, while that of the total population was 4.6%. Only 27.6% of young people were employed and a large proportion of young people (21.4%) were inactive, implicating that they did not contribute to economic production or investment of human capital in education or training. The results of the ETVA also revealed that the unemployment rate of young adults (20 to 29 years) is more than twice that of adolescents and higher for urban youth than for those in rural areas. In addition, the urban youth unemployment rate is 16.4% compared to 4.4% in rural areas. These statistics

suggested that employment opportunities were more in the rural areas than the urban areas. The questions are: Do rural areas offer employment opportunities? What are the measures that can improve employment and income opportunities for young people in rural areas? This study was initiated to answer these questions as part of the Program for accompanying Agricultural Research and Innovations (PARI) Project with the aim to offer policy recommendations to improve youth employment situation in Benin.

Purpose of the study

The aim of this study is to identify measures that can improve employment and income opportunities for young people in rural areas of Benin. Specific objectives are, to:

- ✓ Identify the promising agricultural and non-agricultural employments that are yet to be harnessed.
- ✓ Understand and identify the enabling environment in terms of regulations, investments, infrastructure, education, training networks and others needed by youth employment actors to increase the chances of finding employment in targeted rural areas

Structure of the report

This report presents the information obtained in the literature as well as the collection of exploratory data. It is organized in five sections. The introductory section presents the context and the objectives of the study, the overview of youth employment in Benin is contained in the second section, the third section describes the methodological approach adopted while the fourth section presents the results and discussion. Fifth, conclusion as well as the implications for research and development is presented in the last section.

Overview of Youth Employment in Benin

Challenges related to youth employment in rural areas of the African continent

African countries have experienced rapid growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the last decade, accounting for about 5.3 percent in 2012 well above the global average of 3.3 percent (ACBF, 2016). Unemployment of youth within the age of 15 and 24 years remains much higher than in the rest of the world. The rural population is very important in Africa as a large part of the labor force is engaged in agriculture. Agricultural activities play an important role in youth employment, unless urban areas are able to create massive amount of jobs which is unlikely. In the short term, only non-agricultural rural activities can actually create jobs for most new jobseekers because agriculture is a basic activity.

The specificities of African economy and the labor market of the continent raised some conceptual problems in terms of youth employment. The labor market of developing countries and more particularly of sub-Saharan African countries, differ from those of other advanced countries in that, majority of the labor force occupies informal jobs.

A judicious choice of labor-intensive investments in agriculture and other rural non-farm activities can create an immediate short-term job opportunity that are more accessible to youth. When combined with locally appropriate economic development strategies, the approach can create more sustainable jobs but will require developing strategies that will make the agricultural option attractive enough for young people to engage in. Particularly, it is important to de-emphasize subsistence agriculture and promote business farming that ensure investments for productivity, infrastructure development, input and output marketing. Recent developments in the global food, science and technology market and many institutions affecting competitiveness create new challenges for the competitiveness of smallholders and also offer new revenue opportunities.

It is important to know that; Job creation requires accelerated progress to increase agricultural productivity and build bridges between the poor and the markets. Also, sustainable growth that is capable of reducing poverty in rural areas requires a substantial increase in agricultural value added with several sectoral approaches to support agribusiness and diversification of rural activities. Creating jobs that will improve the incomes, well-being and also retain young people in the rural areas, requires huge investment in irrigation, water resources management, research and extension. Development of public services in rural areas is also necessary to increase the use of seeds and fertilizers and to improve agricultural practices. In rural areas, labor market can generally be represented through a two-level employment structure: an agricultural sector and a non-agricultural sector. The proximity of an urban environment can "increase" the rural labor market because it often provides employment opportunities for rural migrants (Hathie *et al.*, 2015).

Moreover, it is important to invest in rural education and human capital to increase the productivity of rural activities and improve the livelihood of the populace. This is necessary as today young rural workers may be the urban workers of tomorrow. Young people are itinerant, they explore new opportunities by changing from one sector to another in search of greener pasture. Therefore, policies designed to develop the agricultural and non-farm sectors will likely have an impact on young people, even if they do not specifically target them. Promoting rural small and medium-size enterprises using new technologies could have a relative impact on young people who are trained to use them. Creation of jobs and expanding educational opportunities in rural areas could lead to reduction in the migration of youth from the rural to the urban areas, as migration is a major problem and policymakers should adopt strategies to reduce unemployment and under-employment in cities to prevent further deterioration of living conditions. Creation of employment opportunities will reduce the current dangerous migration to Europe and other western countries. The current trend in migration has affected the demography of the rural setting, leaving the old and aged on the farm; creating acute shortage of farm labor. It is usually the youngest, the most educated and the most qualified who leave. Youth migration can therefore reduce entrepreneurship and the level of education of those who remain. In addition, migration can alter the gender weighting of rural populations. Although migration is believed to have some advantages such as risk diversification, improvement in rural incomes through remittances, increases in knowledge and opportunities etc. This is however not sustainable; hence the

policy system needs to develop a system that will make youth migration unattractive through the creation of other effective opportunities for quality life in rural areas.

Employment opportunities for rural youth are not only in the agricultural sector, but also in non-agricultural activities. When rural settlements are included, the rural non-farm sector accounts for about 20% of employment opportunities in sub-Saharan Africa (FAO, 2016). The history of economic development showed that the development of the non-agricultural sector depends on the increase in farm productivity. As technological innovations improve, agricultural productivity also improves and labor is released for the non-farm sector. The range of possibilities in rural areas is much wider than one might think.

The rural non-farm economy can generate a large proportion of rural incomes, and this ratio is increasing in a large number of countries. Wages in the non-farm sector is higher because the skills required are not the same. Crop losses and other factors also affects the profitability of agricultural sector. Data from around the world showed that Labor productivity (measured by value added per worker) is higher in the non-farm sector.

While agriculture remains the most important rural source of income in Africa, the income from rural non-farm activities is increasing. The low contribution of the non-farm sector to employment suggests that it could play a significant role in job creation and income generation.

Without a dynamic rural economy in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, the demand for labor will not increase to meet increasing unemployment. It is therefore essential to create a climate that is conducive for investment and to put in place the infrastructure needed to prepare cities and towns to welcome businesses and also cope with urbanization.

The labor market in Benin

Offer of employment in Benin is expressed by the State (public service, local authorities and public enterprises) or by private companies in all its forms (private, associative or individual enterprise) or spontaneously by the creation of a formal unit. Labor supply is dependent on demography and on the working population or the population of working age. Most of the information in this section is based on the 2012 Labor Force Transition Survey (ETVA) conducted by the International Labor Organization (ILO).

Characteristics of the job offer in Benin

Formal and informal employment

The data collected on youth employment confirmed the level of the informal economy in the country. ETVA measured two aspects of informality at the level of workers and enterprises. In 2012, informal jobs accounted for 89.7% of youth employment in Benin, with little differences in gender. The analysis of informal jobs revealed the existence of informal jobs in

the formal sector, for example undeclared jobs. It was reported that 89.9% of informal jobs were created in the informal sector and 10.1% in the formal sector. The situation reflected the importance of the informal sector in Benin economy. It is also important to note that the proportion of informal jobs outside the informal sector was a concern and highlighted the precarious situation of some jobs in the formal sector. Informal employment in the informal sector was prevalent among young women (94.1%) than young men (84.5%). This was because of the types of activities generally performed by women: trade, catering and many more. In urban areas, 28% of young men were in informal employment in the formal sector. The situation was explained by the reluctance of formal private enterprises to regularize the employment situation of the young people. Indeed, many young graduates were employed as trainees or work for long hours without having a clear professional situation within the company.

Vacancies and Recruitment Process

Majority of Beninese companies emanated from private initiatives (87.2%) of which 6.4% were owned by families. The results of ETVA (2012) indicated that an overwhelming majority (92.5%) of companies did not have vacancies. This limits job opportunities for jobseekers, especially young people. Most of the available vacancies offered one or two positions.

In-respective of the recruitment process, either executives, professional, production worker or basic occupation, vacant positions were usually advertised to relatives or friends. However, companies were using this practice more to recruit production and elementary workers. The practice did not give the general public access to information and reduced the chances of some jobseekers to enter into the labor market. Advertising, which would be the most appropriate channel for announcing vacancies, was adopted by 14% of the companies. The survey also revealed that very few advertisements go through schools and training institutes and had a negative effect on young people. The result raised the problem of the match between training programs and the needs of the labor market. By analyzing the question according to the size of the firms, it appeared that the larger the companies, the more they tend to use "formal" channels for the advertisement of job vacancies regardless of the category of workers for recruitment. It can therefore be said that, only large companies adopted different ways of advertising job vacancies.

Factors influencing employer selection during recruitment

For the recruitment of managers and professionals, in 45.6% cases, preference was given to workers over 29 years of age. On the other hand, for the recruitment of production or elementary workers, employers preferred young people between 15 and 29 years of age giving the young newly-trained and inexperienced workers to secure jobs. About 70% of the recruiters indicated they have no preference for specific sex, however, discrimination in favor of men was observed, especially when it comes to recruiting directors or professionals (INSAE, 2013). In addition, employers were generally indifferent to the marital status of the applicant. Level of education influenced the choice of employers when recruiting, applicants who had completed higher school were preferred for executive and professional positions as

well as those in production or elementary work. In addition, completion of Primary School was an important factor for production-based occupation candidates. Analyzing by sectors revealed that, formal entrepreneurs had a greater preference for workers with a higher level of education than those in the informal firms. To conclude, the main characteristic that employers were interested in during the recruitment process varied according to the type of position to be filled. It was observed that, for the managerial and professional positions, work experience seemed to be the main factor that determined the employability. The situation was not in favor of young people at 29, since they must first have a few years of professional experience. Employers also considered trainings received by the applicant as part of the criteria for employment as well as their expectations from the prospective employee (INSAE, 2013).

For production workers and elementary occupations, the focus was less on work experience, although this criterion remains the most important. For this category of workers, there was more interest in the training received by the applicant and also the attitude? Business leaders were not influenced by criteria such as gender, ethnicity and especially age in their choices.

Characteristics of application for employment in Benin

The job search objectives of young unemployed people in Benin were quite precise as the desire to start their own businesses or farms seemed to be predominant (INSAE, 2013). Women were more interested in having their personal business or farms while men preferred working for the state or for private companies. In the same vein, three out of ten young Beninese desired to work in a private company. According to the results of the INSAE (2013), there were 443,766 young self-employed workers, i.e. 56.4% of the young people in Benin in activity. The self-employed workers represented 54.1% of the self-employed and 2.3% of the employers. Among them were 249,136 young women (56.3%) and 194,630 men (56.4%). Independence was highlighted by 57.4% of the self-employed workers as a major factor for being self-employed which goes beyond "the inability of finding a salaried job (15.5%). One out of ten young people said that their desire to have higher income and the demand from their family was a motivating factor for becoming independent. The rural environment in Benin was mainly dominated by agricultural activity explaining the predominance of self-employed workers in rural areas. About 296,142 young self-employed people lived in rural areas (66.7%) (INSAE, 2013). Majority (55.3%) of the young people workers got their current jobs within three months while 13.1% of young workers spent more than two years to obtain their current jobs (INSAE, 2013).

However, after leaving school, young Beninese can take up to four years to find their first job. In 2012, more than 42% of young people spent more than a year looking for work and in 2014, only 11% of 15 to 29-years young people had secured employments (INSAE, 2013).

Job demand in Benin was also characterized by the method used in search of jobs. The method that was mostly used by over 55% of young people was to look for job with friends, family and colleagues. It is therefore important for Beninese policy makers to keep the National Employment Agency (ANPE) more operational and to increase the impact of the

ANPE to be a platform for job finding. The data collected by ETVA (2012) showed that proposed salary level was the first reason for job refusal by young people.

Access of young people in the labor market

Examining the obstacles to youth employment highlighted the weakness of the Beninese economic fabric and its weak capacity to absorb the young workforce, nearly 60% of the unemployed stressed that lack of available jobs was a problem. This was the major obstacle to their professional integration (Migan, 2014). The problem of employment in general and of youth employment in particular was addressed in several Benin reference documents (INSAE, 2013). In Alafia (2025), employment is closely linked to the question of human capital development located upstream, at the heart and downstream of any process of sustainable harmonious development. The abilities of graduates who leave the education system are most often unsuited to the demands of the labor market. With regard to the Strategic Guidelines for the Development of Employment from 2006-2011, one of the guidelines is the strengthening of human capital for the protection of vulnerable groups and the promotion of youth employment as fundamental elements of the socio-economic development of the country. Strategic directions 4 and 5 highlighted the problem of youth employment, promoting their initiatives and creating the conditions for the first recruitment. Finally, the growth strategy for poverty reduction (2011-2015) reaffirmed that unemployment and under-employment were major concerns of the government, due to imbalances in the labor market due to the arrival, each year, of a very high proportion of applicants for employment. This reflects the weak absorption capacity of the economic fabric. Some of the causes of poor young people access to the labor market have been elaborated below (Migan, 2014).

Inadequate skills of young people

The inadequacy of young people skills, particular the disconnection between the training provided by the educational system and the world of work, was one of the major difficulties faced by young people looking for work. This was more evident at the level of higher education where many young people were enrolled in faculties with little practical skills. Training given in technical education, vocational training (TVET) and higher education were those that have been in place for decades without much change over time to adapt to new developments. New specialties related to the needs of the economy were rarely created, yet, there are niches of employment in the economy for which training centers and Universities do not offer corresponding training. Young people realized at the end of their training that they are excluded from the labor market and this situation does not allow them to be important players in the development of the nation. It is necessary to place the question at the center of reflections in order to put an end to the eternal pre-occupations related to the lack of training / employment. The Observatories of Employment and Training (OEF) have a fundamental role to play in resolving this situation.

Some training opportunities, although related to the labor market, do not promote the acquisition of the skills necessary for trainees to enter the labor market. The practical training provided in the training centers to make competent trained and non-existent professionals occur due to two fundamental reasons:

Obsolescence and inadequate training infrastructures: The case of Benin is deplorable in the field of TVET while the few equipment found in our Institutions are obsolete, manufactured for more than half a century. The equipment's are very limited in number and do not promote the transmission of quality know-how that will allow young people to gain the necessary skills needed to enter into the labor market.

Insufficient trainers: Most of the trainers are not in tune with the technological environment because they have not been recycled to adapt to the evolution of tools towards modernity. This lack of skills sometimes forces trainers to turn practical training into theoretical learning.

Ignorance of the labor market

Young people do not always have access to information on the job market. This situation does not facilitate a better choice of niche markets. The lack of knowledge of the labor market is mainly due to:

- The unavailability of labor market information sources. Structures such as the Observatory of Law Enforcement and Training (OEF) are not operational and lack the means to achieve their objectives.
- Lack of dissemination of existing information and popularization of the results of some studies carried out in the context of the labor market.
- Young unemployed people do not know where to go to work. The ETVA survey revealed that 95.4% of young people did not receive any advice on job search and vacancies.

Lack of a monitoring and integration mechanism for young people looking for job

Another identified problem according to the assertion of the young people is the lack of professional experience which hampers their integration into working environment. The methods used to search and obtain job by the unemployed youth's revealed discriminatory practices against the poor and the disadvantaged groups. Thus, limiting access of employment opportunities to young people from these groups. Hence, resulting to the use of personal relationships to secure jobs among majority of the youths.

The National Employment Agency (ANPE) has been decentralized in all departments of the country to encourage young people looking for job to be registered with the departmental structures. Recruitment is done by several sources, so that no structure is really involved in monitoring young people looking for work. Due to this, young people that are competent are discouraged and forced to work in the field at which they are not trained.

Low entrepreneurial orientation of young people

Despite the upward trend in the youth unemployment rate, training programs do not give orientation to students and build entrepreneurial mindset in youths. The department system trains professionals who do not have any intention of creating their own businesses and create wealth. This is why it is difficult for TVET and higher education graduates to enter the labor market. Most feel trained to be recruited.

The few young people who want to start their own business often do not find structures that can help them technically and financially in their business. Very few avenues exist for this purpose. The government is aware of this and has planned the installation of BPC (Business Promotion Centers) in the main cities of the country. However, it should be emphasized that financial support structures still do not allow young people to access financial resources adapted to their settlement needs. Traditional financial institutions do not give credit to entrepreneurs without the guarantee which is difficult to acquire by young people as a result such initiatives are most often abandoned.

Decrease Business Environment

The business climate in Benin is not the brightest. Since 2006, “Doing Business” report of the World Bank indicated a deterioration with almost constant ranking of Benin (175th out of 185 countries in 2013), revealing that the economic environment remains unfavorable to businesses despite efforts deployed by the authorities. The situation has improved in recent years with a jump of 4 percentage points in the ranking between 2017 and 2018. However, Benin remains the 151th economy back on the world map 190 and the 25th of 53 in the ease of doing business. The country remains behind most of its West African counterparts especially after Nigeria (145th), Niger (144th) and Burkina Faso (148th); its immediate neighbors (World Bank, 2018). In these circumstances, it is difficult to orient young people towards entrepreneurship or to promote paid employment, even when the conditions are not established. The poor quality of the business environment is a real obstacle to private investment and business development in Benin.

Measures for the Development of Technical and Professional Skills

Most of Benin strategic documents have highlighted the quality of human capital as a major problem of youth employment. Aware of the situation, the government has decided to reform the technical and vocational training program aimed at strengthening the employability of young people. The reforms initiated have been described by Migan (2014). They are summarized below:

Technical and vocational education

This education is taught in the high schools and colleges of the country. It is divided into two cycles: the first cycle between three and four years, it is open to students in the fifth grade of general education and the second cycle also last for another three to four years. At the end of the first cycle, Certificate of Professional Aptitude (CAP) or the Diploma of Studies of

Tropical Agriculture is awarded while at the end of the second cycle training, the higher school certificate is obtained.

Professional training

It takes into account the vocational training scheme as an alternative Post Education Basic (FPAPEB) which is a form of training designed and implemented for early school leavers, unemployed graduates and all other persons with less than three years and wishing to acquire a professional training and business skills. The training is aimed solely at self-employment and is part of the lifelong learning dynamic, in particular vocational retraining. The training is in modules and the duration is two years, including 15 months training within an Institution and seven months of internship in a company. The final exam is organized by a jury chaired by professionals. The Departmental Director of the Ministry of Vocational Training provides supervision and issues a diploma called "Certificate of Professional Qualification (CQP)".

Apprenticeship training

This form of training takes place in two places namely; the workshop or the craft enterprise and the training center. It helps the apprentice to learn how to read and write in French for at least six (6) months from a master craftsman with whom is established a contract of oral or written learning, to complete their theoretical and practical knowledge in vocational training centers and public and private high schools for one (1) day a week. This training last for 3 years and is sanctioned by a diploma called "Certificate of Professional Qualification (CQP)".

Traditional apprenticeship

Traditional apprenticeship is the training that takes place on production in a workshop or craft business where the apprentice finds himself in verbal learning contract, bonds or written with a master craftsman, sole responsible for the initial training. In order to modernize this training to make it more effective and more or less formal, the State of Benin has decided to sanction it with a national diploma entitled "Certificate of Qualification (CQM)". To this end, 25 skill reference points have been developed to serve as a basis for the assessment of learning at the national level. This review now replaces traditional releases and the traditional end-of-apprenticeship examination (EFAT) organized in municipalities by professional organizations.

Formation of short durations (3 to 6 months)

Some categories of young people do not want to spend too much time on training and want short-term training that can help them earn a quick living. Thus, the Office for the Transformation and Integration of Youth (DRIJ), in response to the concern of these young people and has set up short-term training based on promising activities (agriculture, tourism, etc.). A certificate is issued at the end of the training.

Mechanism for strengthening the skills of entrepreneurs and master crafts persons in the informal sector

The capacity building of master craftsmen is mainly provided by the Fund for the Development of Continuing Vocational Training and Learning (FODEFCA). As far as entrepreneurs are concerned, these courses are rare in several institutions. However, the Ministry of Secondary and Vocational Education has provided a mechanism in the institutions for this service to be carried out whenever necessary.

The establishment of a continuous training system: the Ministry of Secondary and Vocational Education has developed a continuous professional training system which is gradually being put in place in technical and vocational training establishments.

Capacity Building for Continuing Education for Master Crafts men: Through FODEFCA, the Beninese State is building the capacity of artisans and master craftsmen so that they are able to provide their apprentices with the required skills.

Capacity building for businessmen: These are short courses (less than one month), mainly financed by the companies themselves or by the government. In addition, some companies have workers who have participated in work experience or an internship program at an educational or training institution.

Existing partnerships with private actors

Two partnerships have been established to improve Beninese technical and professional skills. However, these partnerships are struggling to produce encouraging results.

The National TVET Council: It is a crucible of consultations between the private and the public sector in order to link training to the requirements of the Labor market.

The National Steering Committee for Apprenticeship Training: It provides guidance for activities and coherence of all vocational training actions through learning across the national territory, regardless of their sources of funding.

From all of the above, a general overview on employment in Benin has been made. In the next section, the methodological approaches used in this study have been presented:

Methodology

The study was conducted in three phases. Phase one was exploratory, it contained reviews of literature permitted to write a paper, to identify and describe the youth employment initiatives implemented in Benin between 2000 and 2018. This was followed by a qualitative survey (individual interview and focus group discussions) to identified different initiatives, gather information from program implementers and also document the perceptions of beneficiaries on the implementation of the initiatives. Finally, the quantitative survey was

conducted to gather quantified data on initiatives to carry out descriptive and econometric analyses in order to inform policy.

Study area

The exploratory phase was conducted with the project manager of programs and structures in charge of promoting youth employment in Benin. Most of the structures visited are located in the Atlantic and Littoral Departments. Selection of study areas was made from existing data of General Census of Population and Housing (RGPH 4) conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Analysis (INSAE) in 2013 for the qualitative and quantitative phases. Selection criteria were based on the number of young people aged 15 to 45 years in rural areas and the number of young people in the most populated Departments with low unemployment rates. Based on these criteria, the Departments of Atlantic and Ouémé were selected as Departments with high population rate and high unemployment rate while the Departments of Borgou and Alibori were selected for their large population and low unemployment rate.

Table 1: Distribution of young people in four major Departments in Benin

Departments	Extended unemployment rate (%)	Number of young people in rural areas (15-45 years)
Atlantic	3.5	620,814
Ouémé	2.4	479, 776
Borgou	0.3	499,056
Alibori	0.7	346, 985

Sampling Procedure

Selection of large-scale initiatives

In order to select large-scale initiatives of youth employment in the four study areas, various steps were taken. They were:

Step 1: Inventory of large-scale initiatives

During the exploratory phase, a total of eighteen initiatives implemented in Benin from 2000 to 2018 were identified. The initiatives were classified based on the type of interventions rendered. For effectiveness, each type of initiatives according to the context of the Beninese country was defined together with its concept.

Employment: According to the ILO definition, a person is employed when performing paid work during a reference period. In our context, employment is any profession, on its own account, paid or generating wealth and responding to a social or economic need.

Large-Scale Employment Initiative: The definition of the large-scale employment initiatives maintained for this study is, the set of initiatives that have been created or that have facilitated job creation or recruitment of young people.

Public Employment Initiative: This is an initiative that recruits people or facilitates the acquisition of employment through training, employment information, placement or direct employment into the public sector by the Government or a State structure.

Private Employment Initiative: This is an initiative to recruits rural people or facilitates the acquisition of employment through training, employment information, placement or direct employment into the private sector through private companies.

Self-Employment Initiative: This initiative aims to create self-employment (including informal ones) by rural youth.

Public-Private Partnership Initiative: Through a partnership between public institutions and the private sector.

However, two (02) public initiatives, three (03) "private" initiatives and eighteen (18) "self-employed" initiatives and one (1) public-private partnership (PPP) initiative were selected for study.

Step 2: Selection of large-scale initiatives

For each type/category of initiatives, one initiative was selected.

Table 2: Types of selected Initiative

Type of initiative	Initiative	Type of interventions
<i>Private</i>	Recruitment in the private service	Hiring, Training, Employment contract
<i>Public-Private Partnership</i>	PaDE ¹	Training, Development of employment policies
<i>Public</i>	Recruitment in the public service	Hiring, Training, Employment contract
<i>Self-employment</i>	PPEA ²	Training, Financial subsidy for starting the activity

¹Decentralized Partnership for Employment

²Agricultural Entrepreneurship Promotion Project

Selection of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the various selected initiatives

Respondents for the quantitative survey were the beneficiaries and non-recipients of the four types of initiatives. A random selection was used to select the beneficiaries in the Departments from the beneficiary lists. This list was obtained in the various programs selected with regard to those recruited from the public administration. The list was drawn with the help of the municipal authorities at the level of each commune. For the non-beneficiaries of the same Department, the snowball sampling technique was used to identify

those who did not participate in any initiative with the help of the village chief. However, non-beneficiaries must have the same characteristics as the beneficiaries (15-45 years, level of education, sector of activity and others).

The sample size was 150 beneficiaries per initiative due to resource constraints while One-third of the sample size of the beneficiaries was used as the size of the non-beneficiaries.

Data Collection

Questionnaire was designed in English and translated to French. Modification of the questionnaire was done after obtaining the pretest result during enumerator's training. The questionnaire was administered to 642 respondents, data were collected on: (i) the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent and his household, (ii) employment and income history, (iii) participation in various employment programs for young people; (iv) employment opportunities for young people who have remained unexploited or under-exploited; (v) participation in training or skills development programs, digital access and its use. Table 3 shows the breakdown of respondents by department and by initiative.

Table 3: Number of respondents by type of initiative and Department

Department	Type of employment	Sample size of beneficiaries	Size of control sample	Total
Alibori	Self-employment	13	01	14
	Public employment	20	05	25
	Private employment	15	07	22
	Private Public Partnership	00	01	01
<i>Subtotal 1</i>		<i>48</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>62</i>
Borgou	Self-employment	32	10	42
	Public employment	21	24	45
	Private employment	35	18	53
	Private Public Partnership	04	05	09
<i>Subtotal 2</i>		<i>92</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>149</i>
Atlantic	Self-employment	69	27	96
	Public employment	59	10	69
	Private employment	63	13	76
	Private Public Partnership	08	09	17
<i>Subtotal 3</i>		<i>199</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>258</i>
Ouémé	Self-employment	29	13	42
	Public employment	45	16	61
	Private employment	45	20	65
	Private Public Partnership	02	03	05
<i>Subtotal 4</i>		<i>121</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>173</i>
Total		460	182	642

Methods of data analysis

For the quantitative survey, descriptive statistics was used to analyze the distribution of various variables collected. Econometric analyses provided a better understanding of the determinants of youth employment in Benin.

Theoretical Framework

An empirical review of factors that determine youth employment

Duguma and Tolcha (2019) analyzed the determinants of unemployment in Ethiopia, the study revealed that about 61.5% of young people were unemployed and 38.6% were employed. The result of the binary logit model showed that sex, education, marital status, skills adequacy and access to credit for young people were considered as determinants of urban youth unemployment, while prosperity of the family and the market were statistically insignificant for urban youth unemployment. It also showed the need for the government to create jobs by identifying employment opportunities and industrialization of agriculture.

Ndagijimana *et al.* (2018) analyzed the determinants of youth employment in Rwanda using a multinomial logistic model. These authors used a categorical variable indicating whether the individual was in paid employment in the public sector, the formal private sector, the informal private sector, independent, inactive or unemployed. Etfo and Lufumpa (2014) also in Rwanda examined the explanatory factors of employment using a multinomial logit model. Employment status was examined through employment in the formal, informal and agricultural sectors, employment in the non-agricultural sector and self-employment in the non-agricultural sector and agriculture. Results showed that gender, age, formal education, obtaining credit, value of farm assets, non-farm income, number of young children and area of residence determined employment status for young Rwandans.

In Tanzania, Msigwa and Kipsha (2013) also used a multinomial logistic regression model to analyze the determinants of youth unemployment. The dependent variable, which was the employment status of young Tanzanians, had three categories: active, unemployed and inactive. The study was carried out to know the chances of a young Tanzanian being employed, unemployed or inactive, based on several demographic characteristics. It was observed that gender, place of residence, skills, marital status and level of education were significant variables that explained differences in employment status in Tanzania.

In Romania, Oancea *et al.* (2016) estimated the influence of education level on unemployment. The binary logistic model was used to determine the influence of age, educational level, sex and geographic location on youth unemployment. In addition, Baah-Boateng (2013) also examined the determinants of unemployment in Ghana using a binary probit model because of the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable. The study concluded that the number of young people aged 15-24 years, primary education, secondary education, area of residence (urban and other areas), poverty status, income, full-time work, status self-employment were key determinants of unemployment in Ghana. Duguma and

Tolcha (2019); Shita and Dereje (2018); Abshoko (2016) used binary logistic regressions to examine the determinants of youth unemployment in Ethiopia.

Other authors have used both binary logistic model and multinomial logistic model to better understand employment status in Pakistan and Egypt (Faridi *et al.*, 2009; Assaad *et al.*, 2000). According to Assaad *et al.*, (2000), the variable that most impacted employment status was the level of secondary education, sex and age. Reaching the secondary level had a significant influence on obtaining paid employment in rural areas. However, gender (man) determined casual, self-employment or agricultural work. As for age, it is more decisive for women and for the different categories of jobs. Also, the results of Assaad *et al.*, (2000) indicated that the higher the level of education, the less interest the Egyptians had in self-employment.

A binary logistic model was used to analyze a global or general way of employment status among Beninese youth and a multinomial logistic model to examine the specific explanatory factors of the different job categories (employee, self-employment and unemployment) as described by Faridi *et al.*(2009) and Assaad *et al.* (2000).

Theoretically, employment (or unemployment) is the result of the interaction between demand and Labor supply (Faridi *et al.*, 2009). Thus, the model of determinants of unemployment is defined as follows:

$$U_i = \alpha + \beta S_i + \delta D_i + \theta Z_i + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

Where U_i is the user status (dichotomous in the case of binary regression and polychromic in the case of the multinomial regression); S_i a vector of explanatory variables of the supply factors; D_i denotes a vector of variables that explain the demand and Z_i represents a vector of other control variables (socio-demographic characteristics) that influence the status of the person's employment or unemployment. β , δ and ϑ are parameter vectors of the explanatory variables, α is the intercept term and ε is the standard vector representing the stochastic error term.

Specification of models

The probability of having a job was studied using two logit models in this study. The first model was a logistic regression that provided insight into the factors influencing employment or unemployment. In the second model, a multinomial logit was used to determine the factors that influenced employment status of young people (employee, self-employment and unemployment).

❖ Binary logistic regression

The binary logistic regression predicts the values of a dichotomous variable Y that takes only two values, (0 or 1), as a function of a set of explanatory variables, which may be quantitative or categorical variables (Bogdan *et al.*, 2016). The logit model predicts the probabilities of the results of a dependent variable (Hosmer and Lemeshow, 2000). Thus, logistic regression is used in a wide range of applications leading to category-dependent data analysis (Agresti, 2002). The binary logistic regression model was used in this study to

identify the determinants of youth employment (occupation by income-generating activity). The youth status is the dependent variable of the model: dichotomous $Y_i=1$ if the respondent is employed/having a probability of income activity (P_i) and $Y_i = 0$ the probability of not being employed / having no probability of income generating activity ($1-P_i$). The expression of P_i in a logistic model is as follows:

$$P_i = P(y_i=1 | X_i) = \frac{e^{X_i\beta}}{1+e^{X_i\beta}} ; i=1; 2, \dots, n. \quad (2)$$

With $P(y_i = 1 | X_i)$ is the probability that the i^{th} individual is employed given the individual characteristics X_i and $\beta (\beta_0, \beta_1, \dots, \beta_k)^T$ dimension vector $(k + 1) \times 1$.

On the other hand, the relationship between the probability that the individual i is unemployed and his characteristics is non-linear. For interpretation to be meaningful, it should be written as a linear combination of predictors. The logit transformation is given by:

$$\text{Log} [P_i] = \log \left(\frac{P_i}{1-P_i} \right) = \sum_{j=0}^k \beta_j X_{ij}; i=1; 2, \dots, n \text{ et } j=0,1, \dots, k. \text{ Where, } X_{i0} = (1,1,\dots,1)^T \quad (3)$$

The parameter β_j refers to the effect of X_j on the probabilities of being employed that is $Y_i = 1$, controlling for other variables in the model. The method of estimating the parameter of logistic regression model is the maximum likelihood (ML) method instead of the ordinary least squares (OLS) method.

Considering the logistic model $P(y_i=1 | X_i) = \frac{e^{X_i\beta}}{1+e^{X_i\beta}}$. Since the observed values of $Y (Y_i, i= 1,2,\dots, n)$ are independently distributed as Bernoulli random variables, the maximum likelihood function of y is the joint density function given by:

$$L(\beta | Y) = \prod_{i=1}^n P(y_i = 1 | X_{i1}, \dots, X_{ik}) = \prod_{i=1}^n P \left[\frac{e^{X_i\beta}}{1+e^{X_i\beta}} \right]^{y_i} \left[\frac{1}{1+e^{X_i\beta}} \right]^{1-y_i} \quad (4)$$

The maximum likelihood estimates of the parameters are obtained by maximizing the log-likelihood function given by:

$$\text{Log} L(\beta | Y) = \sum_{i=1}^n \left\{ y_i \log \left[\frac{e^{X_i\beta}}{1+e^{X_i\beta}} \right] + 1 - y_i \log \left[\frac{1}{1+e^{X_i\beta}} \right] \right\} \quad (5)$$

After adjusting the logistic regression model or once a model has been developed in several stages to estimate the coefficients, several techniques are used to evaluate the relevance, the adequacy of the model. First, the importance of each of the explanatory variables will be evaluated by performing statistical tests on the significance of the coefficients. Then, the overall quality of the fit of the model will be tested (Agresti, 1996). Pearson's chi-square, LR tests, Hosmer and Lemeshow's fit test, and Wald tests are commonly used measures of the validity of the adjustment for categorical data (Hosmer and Lemeshow, 1989).

The model of logistics analysis is specified as follows:

$$\text{Status}_i = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{Marital}_i + \beta_2 \text{Nemply}_i + \beta_3 \text{Info}_i + \beta_4 \text{Particip}_i + \beta_5 \text{Socnetwork}_i + \beta_6 \text{Sex}_i + \beta_7 \text{Age}_i + \beta_8 \text{Size}_i + \beta_9 \text{Studyyear}_i + \beta_{10} \text{Timespent}_i + \varepsilon \quad (7)$$

Where, *Status* is the employment status, *Marital* is the marital status, *Nemply* is the number of persons employed in the household, *Info* is the information's on job opportunities, *Particip* is the participation in training on employment, *Socnetwork* is use of social networks, *Sex* is the sex of the respondent, *Age* is the age of the respondent, *Size* is the size of the household, *Studyyear* is number of years of study, *Timespent* is time spent on social networks.

Multinomial logistic regression

In order to determine the factors influencing the type of youth employment, multinomial logistic regression model that generalizes logistic regression by allowing more than two discrete outcomes was used. The multinomial logistic model predicts the probabilities of the different possible outcomes of a categorically distributed dependent variable from a set of independent variables. This model is used when there are more than two categories and the dependent variable is categorical in nature, i.e. it falls into one of the categories that cannot be ordered in a meaningful way (Greene, 2003). The choice of model is focused on its relevance in the case of a categorical dependent variable, here the type of employment (salaried employment, self-employment and unemployment) and its frequent use in similar studies on youth employment. The general model of multinomial logistic analysis is specified as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 & Typemploy_i = \\
 & \alpha + \beta_1 Marital_i + \beta_2 Location_i + \beta_3 Info_i + \beta_4 Particip_i + \beta_5 socnetwork_i + \beta_6 Sex_i + \\
 & \beta_7 Age_i + \beta_8 Levelofeducation_i + \beta_9 timespent_i + \varepsilon
 \end{aligned}
 \tag{8}$$

Where, *Typemploy* is the type of employment, *Marital* is the marital status, *Location* is the geographic location, *Info* is the information on job opportunities, *Particip* is the participation in training on employment, *Socnetwork* is use of social networks, *Sex* is the sex of the respondent, *Age* is the age of the respondent, *Level* is the level of education, *Studyyear* is number of years of study, *Timespent* is time spent on social networks.

Table 4: Signs of the variables introduced in the models.

Description	Type of variable	Expected sign
<i>Dependent variables</i>		
Employment Status	0 = Unemployed and 1 = employed	Binary logistic regression
Type of employment	1 = Payed employment 2 = Self-employment 3 = Unemployment	Multinomial logistic regression
<i>Independent variables</i>		
Sex	1 = Male and 2 = Female	+/-
Age	Year	+/-
Size of household	Number of people	+/-
Marital status	0 = single and 1 = married	+
Information on job opportunities	1 = yes and 0 = no	+

Number of persons employed in the household	Number of people	+
University	1 = yes and 0 = no	+
Secondary School 1	1 = yes and 0 = no	+
Secondary School 2	1 = yes and 0 = no	+
Primary School	1 = yes and 0 = no	+
No education	1 = yes and 0 = no	-
Number of years of study	Year	+
Participation in training on employment	1 = yes and 0 = no	+
Use of social networks	1 = yes and 0 = no	+/-
Time spent on social networks	Hours	+/-
Geographic location	1=Alibori , 2=Borgou, 3=Atlantic, 4=Oueme	+/-

Results and Discussions

Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents by status (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries)

Table 5 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents by type of youth employment initiative and by status (beneficiary or non-beneficiary of the initiatives). The results showed that, there was significant difference between the average age of beneficiaries of public employment initiative and non-recipients of these initiatives. The result also indicated that the beneficiaries of these initiatives were on the average, 3 years older (33 years) than the non-beneficiaries (30 years). Regarding the sex of the respondents, there was no significant difference between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of public employment initiatives, meaning that the number of male and female beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries were the same. Taking into account the marital status of the respondents, a significant difference was noted between the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Most of them (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries) were married, but there was a significant proportion of non-beneficiaries (36.36%) who were single and there was no widower in this category. Unlike the beneficiaries where there were 0.69% widows / widowers. With regard to respondents' level of education, still in the field of public employment initiatives, a significant difference was noted. It was noted that majority of beneficiaries (48.97%) and non-recipients (58.18%) of this type of initiative had University level of study. Also, the proportion of recipients with the secondary level, 2nd cycle was 35.17% compared to 18.18% of non-recipients (It should also be noted that those with primary education level were more among non-beneficiaries (5.45%) than among beneficiaries (0.69%) of this type of initiative. Regarding literacy, there was no significant difference between the proportions of literate beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in public employment initiatives. For the size of the household, no significant difference was observed between the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of this type of initiative. With regard to religion, a significant difference was noted between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of public employment initiatives.

Majority of the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries practiced Christianity. However, the proportion of Muslim non-beneficiaries (34.55%) was about twice of Muslim beneficiaries (16.55%). Some beneficiaries were animists while none of the non-beneficiary was animist. With regard to the main area of activity of the public employment initiative respondents, there was a significant difference between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

Results for private employment initiative showed that there was no significant difference between the average age of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. This indicated that the beneficiaries and non-recipients of this type of initiative were relatively similar in age. Sex of the respondents in the private employment initiatives showed no significant difference between the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, meaning that the number of men and women beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries were the same. The same trend was observed for marital status, educational level, the number of literates, household size and religion. Also, the proportions of single, married and widowed were approximately the same for the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. The level of education that was most dominant was University followed by high school 2nd round for beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of private employment initiatives. The proportion of literates was relatively the same for the beneficiaries and the non-beneficiaries. The average household size was also proportionately the same for both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. The proportions of Christians, Muslims and animists were relatively the same among the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries with a strong Christian dominance. Finally, in terms of respondents' main occupation of private employment initiatives, there was a significant difference between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

Regarding the self-employment initiative, there was no significant difference between the average age of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. The beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of this type of initiative were about the same age. Sex of the self-employment initiative respondents showed no significant difference between the proportions of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries meaning that, the number of male and female beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries were the same. The same trend was observed for marital status. The proportions of single, married and widowed were approximately the same for both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries and dominated by married. With regard to the level of study, there was a significant difference between the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. About 62.94% and 29.41% attained University level for beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, respectively. There is the university level (29.41%) and the primary level (29.41%) which egalitarian are dominant with a significant proportion of secondary level 2nd cycle (23.53%) education. With regard to literacy, there was no significant difference between the proportions of literate beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in self-employment initiatives. The proportions of literates among beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries were relatively the same. The same result was observed for the average household size, which was proportionally the same for both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. The proportion of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries with respect to different religious beliefs were also almost the same with dominance for Christianity followed by Islam. A significant difference was observed between beneficiaries and non-recipients in terms of main occupation. About half of the beneficiaries (51.05%) were in crop value chain, followed by livestock (21.68%) and another

entrepreneurship in the private sector (16.78%). With beneficiaries, about one-third (33.33%) was in the field of crop value chain, followed by crafts (27.45%) and other entrepreneurship in the private sector (11.76%).

Public Private Partnership employment initiative showed a significant difference between the average age of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. This suggested that recipients of this type of initiative were relatively older (about 34 years) than non-recipients (about 29 years). There was no significant difference between the proportions of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries as regards sex, indicating that the number of male and female beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries was even. On the other hand, with regard to marital status, a significant difference was noted between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. All the beneficiaries (100%) surveyed were married, while among the non-beneficiaries, majority were married (61.11%) and about 38.89% were single. In terms of level of study and literacy, there was also a significant difference between the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of Public Private Partnership employment initiatives. Indeed, all the beneficiaries had the level of university study while among the non-beneficiaries, 55.56%, 22.22% and 22.22% had university level, secondary level 2nd cycle and primary level education, respectively. With regard to literacy, the proportion of literate beneficiaries was significantly higher (64.29%) than that of non-beneficiaries (11.11%). Household size, religion and main occupation, showed no significant difference between the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of Public Private Partnership employment initiatives. The average household size was proportionally the same for both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. The proportions of beneficiaries and non-recipients according to different religious beliefs were also almost the same. For the main occupation, the statistical tests also revealed a non-significant difference between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

Table 5. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents by type of youth employment initiative and by status

Variables	Public employment initiatives			Private Employment Initiatives			Self-Employment Initiatives			Public Private Partnership (PPP) Employment Initiatives			
	Beneficiary	No beneficiary	Test	Beneficiary	No beneficiary	Test	Beneficiary	No beneficiary	Test	Beneficiary	No beneficiary	Test	
Age	33.46 (4.47)	30.09 (5.31)	4.51 ***	29.75 (4.97)	29.13 (5.17)	0.79	31.40 (3.86)	30.90 (4.98)	0.73	33.57 (2.68)	29.11 (5.35)	2.84 ***	
Sex	Male	65.52	65.45	0.00	68.99	68.97	0.00	76.92	76.47	0.00	57.14	72.22	0.79
	Female	34.48	34.55		31.01	31.03		23.08	23.53		42.86	27.78	
Marital status	Single	9.66	36.36		33.54	37.93		23.78	23.53		0,00	38.89	
	Married	89.66	63.64	20.38 ***	65.82	62.07	0.69	74.83	76.47	0.72	100.00	61.11	6.96 ***
	Widowed	0.69	0.00		0.63	0,00		1.40	0,00		0,00	0,00	
Level of study	None	0,00	0,00		0.63	1.72		2.10	5.88		0,00	0,00	
	Primary	0.69	5.45		7.59	5.17		4.20	29.41		0,00	22.22	
	Secondary I	15.17	18.18	9.18 **	19.62	12.07	5.77	9.09	11.76	31.96 ***	0,00	0,00	8.29 **
	Secondary II	35.17	18.18		33.54	25.86		21.68	23.53		0,00	22.22	
	University	48.97	58.18		38.61	55.17		62.94	29.41		100.00	55.56	
Literacy	Yes	44.14	45.45	0.02	39.24	39.66	0.00	46.85	47.06	0.00	64.29	11.11	9.87 ***
	No	55.86	54.55		60.76	60.34		53.15	52.94		35.71	88.89	
Household size	5.05 (3.23)	4.41 (3.59)	1.20	3.89 (2.46)	4.32 (4.44)	-0.89	4.19 (2.35)	4.49 (2.92)	-0.71	4.50 (0.85)	4.61 (3.25)	-0.12	
Religion	Christianity	0.00	63.64	9.58 **	72.78	68.97	3.32	69.93	70.59	0.44	85.71	61.11	3.80
	Muslim	0.00	34.55		20.25	24.14		25.87	25.49		14.29	16.67	

	Animism	0.00	0,00		6.96	5.17		2.10	1.96		0,00	11.11	
	None	0.00	1.82		0,00	1.72		1.40	1.96		0,00	11.11	
	Yoga	0.69	0,00		0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00	
	Eckankar	0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00		0.70	0,00		0,00	0,00	
Main occupation	None	0,00	100.00	200.00 ***	0,00	100	216.00 ***	0.70	0.00	194.00 ***	0.00	100.00	32.00 ***
	Agriculture	0.00	0.00		0,00	0,00		59.44	0.00		0.00	0.00	
	Breeding	0.00	0.00		0,00	0,00		25.87	0.00		0.00	0.00	
	Agroforestry	0.00	0.00		0,00	0,00		2.80	0.00		0.00	0.00	
	Trade	0.00	0.00		0,00	0,00		10.49	0.00		0.00	0.00	
	Crafts	0.00	0.00		0,00	0,00		1.49	0.00		0.00	0.00	
Public worker	sector	100	0.00		0,00	0,00		0.00	0.00		100.00	0.00	
Private worker	sector	0.00	0.00		100	0,00		0.00	11.76		0.00	0.00	

Source: data collection, 2019

*** significant at 1%, ** significant at 5%, * significant at 10%: Test statistics are from means clustering comparison tests (Student *t* test and Wilcoxon test) for quantitative variables and chi-squared test for from categorical variables.

Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents by type of youth employment initiative

Table 5 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents by type of youth employment initiative. Result showed that there was a significant difference between the average age of the respondents of the types of initiatives. The Table 5 also revealed that oldest employment initiatives are the public initiatives. The average age of respondents in the other two initiatives was almost the same. Regarding the sex of the respondents, there was also a significant difference between the four types of initiative. The men and women were relatively the same in the four types of initiative except the 3rd type, self-employment initiatives where there were more men (76.80%) compared to women (23.20%) With regard to marital status, a significant difference was also noted among the initiative types. Most respondents in all the initiative were married, but the highest proportion of married people was found among the respondents of public employment initiatives (82.50%). The level of study showed a significant difference among types of initiatives. At the level of each type of initiatives, majority of the respondents had University education. The statistical tests for literacy revealed no significant difference among the initiatives. This means that the number of literates was proportionally the same for the four types of initiative. With regard to household size, a significant difference was observed among all the initiatives. Those in public employment initiative had a larger household size than respondents in the other types, while respondents in private employment initiative had the lowest household size. Nevertheless, the differences observed among the four initiatives is not substantial. Taking into account religion, the statistical tests revealed no significant difference among all the initiatives. The proportion of different religious beliefs were almost the same for the four initiatives with dominance for Christianity followed by Islam. Statistical tests also revealed a significant difference in the main occupation among the four initiatives. About 82.50% of the respondents in public employment initiative were workers in the public sector while 72.22% in the private employment initiative worked in the private sector. Also, 49.39% of the respondents under the self-employment initiative, concentrated in the agriculture sector while 53.13% of Public Private Partnership employment initiative were workers in private sector.

Table 6: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents by type of youth employment initiatives

Variables	Public Employment initiative	Private Employment Initiative	Self-Employment Initiative	Public Private Partnership (PPP) Employment Initiative	Test
Age	32.53 (4.94)	29.58 (5.02)	31.27 (4.18)	31.06 (4.87)	10.18 ***
Sex					
- Male	65.50	68.98	76.80	65.63	6.61 *
- Female	34.50	31.02	23,20	34.38	
Marital					
- Single	17,00	34.72	23.71	21.88	

status	- Married	82.50	64.81	75.26	78.13	18.77
	- Widowed	0.50	0.46	1.03	0.00	**
Level of education	- None	0.00	0.93	3.09	0.00	
	- Primary	2.00	6.94	10.82	12.50	
	-Secondary 1	16,00	17.59	9.79	0.00	
	- Secondary 2	30.50	31.48	22.16	12.50	44.03
	- University	51.50	43,06	54.12	75.00	***
Literacy	- Yes	44.50	39,35	46.91	34.38	3.53
	- No	55.50	60.65	53.09	65.63	
Household size		4.88 (3.34)	4.01 (3.11)	4.27 (2.51)	4.56 (2.47)	1.74 *
Religion	-	73,00	71.76	70,10	71.88	
	Christianity					
	- Muslim	21.50	21,30	25.77	15.63	18.87
	- Animist	3.00	6.48	2.06	6.25	
	- None	2.00	0.46	1.55	6.25	
	-Sahaga	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	yoga					
	- ECK	0.00	0.00	0.52	0.00	
	- None	2.00	3.24	1.03	0.00	
	Main occupation	- Agriculture	4.00	4.17	46.39	6.25
- Breeding		1.50	0.93	18.56	3.13	
-		0.50	0.46	1.55	0.00	
Agroforestry						641.12
- Trade		0.00	4.63	6.19	3.13	***
- Crafts		1.00	5.09	8.25	9.38	
- Public sector worker		100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	
- Privatesector worker		0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	

Source: Data collection, 2019

*** significant at 1%, ** significant at 5%, * significant at 10%: Test statistics are from means clustering comparison tests (Student *t* test and Wilcoxon test) for quantitative variables and chi-squared test for from categorical variables.

Description of youth by type of employment

Table 6 presents the description and profile of the respondents. It was observed that the diploma with which most employees in the public or private sector possess for recruitment was either the Brevet d'Etude de Premier Cycle (First Cycle Study Certificate), Baccalauréat (High School Diploma) or the License (Bachelor Degree). The main sources of information exploited by most of the public / private employees to hold their posts were friends / parents (38.74%), newspapers, radio, television (19.52%) and contact by the employer (17.72%). A written contract was signed by majority (67.57%) of the public / private employees. Most of them do not benefit from a retirement pension (68.77%), subsidized medical care (66.97%), social security benefits (74.77%), paid vacation (55%) paid sick leave

and / or maternity leave (49.55%). Nevertheless, the proportion of the employees enjoying paid vacations remains significant (44.14%). The average monthly salary of the public / private employees was about 83,859.4 FCFA for an average of 8.15 hours of work per day.

Respondents who were self-employed engaged in activities which were mainly, crop value chains, livestock production, more particularly, poultry farming and to a lesser extent, trading. Most of the entrepreneurs financed their activities with personal funds and some were financed by projects / programs organized by the State. Respondents that sought fund from private microfinance institutions were about 4.03%. About 54.95% of the self-employed people said they were not in need of additional employment while the rest desired additional employment that will complement the current job. The average monthly salary of the self-employment actors amounts to 99,224.95 FCFA for an average of 6.14 hours of work per day.

A particular interest was found in the category of work sought by the unemployed respondents. Three categories stood out: agriculture, forestry and fishing, education and finally commerce. Other areas received little interest. For the listed job categories, a paid job was preferred by majority (52.88%). The sources of information used by the unemployed to look for a job were mostly friends / relatives, newspapers, radio, television, on the internet / sites and to a lesser extent professional colleagues / network.

Table 7: Description of young people by type of employment (paid employment, self-employment, and unemployment)

Variables		Paid employment (public / private)	
		Frequency	Proportion (%)
Recruitment Diploma	CEP (Certificate of Primary School)	30	9.01
	BEPC (First Cycle Study Certificate)	103	30.93
	CAP (Certificate of Professional Competence)	15	4.50
	DUT (Higher Technician Diploma)	1	0.30
	DEAT (Diploma in Tropical Agricultural Studies)	13	3.90
	BAC (High School Diploma)	54	16.22
	BTS (Higher Technician Certificate)	13	3.90
	Bachelor Degree	67	20.12
	Master's Degree	18	5.41
	No Diploma	8	2.40
Source of information of the position	Employment Promotion Agencies	23	6.91
	Newspapers, radio, television	65	19.52
	On the Internet	5	1.50
	Families / Friends	129	38.74
	Colleagues / professional networks	36	10.81
	Verification of a job available on the job site	10	3.00
	Work agencies	1	0.30

	Direct contact by the employer		59	17.72
	Other		5	1.50
Type of Contract	Written		225	67.57
	Verbal		52	15.62
	No contract		56	16.82
Retirement pension	Yes		72	21.62
	No		229	68.77
	Do not know		32	9.61
Subsidised medical care	Yes		110	33,03
	No		223	66.97
Social security benefits	Yes		67	20,12
	No		249	74.77
	Do not know		17	5.11
Paid vacation	Yes		147	44.14
	No		186	55.86
Paid sick leave and / or maternity leave	Yes, sick leave		70	21,02
	Yes, maternity / paternity leave		11	3.30
	Yes both		87	26,13
	No		165	49.55
			Average	SD
	Average monthly salary (in FCFA)		83859.4	66203.29
	Number of hours of work (per day)		8.15	3.16
			Self-employment	
			Frequency	Proportion (%)
Company's activity	Agriculture		89	45.88
	Agriculture and Livestock		17	8.76
	Arts and crafts		19	9.79
	Trade		22	11.34
	Breeding		29	14.95
	Poultry farm		18	9.28
Funding	Project / State Program	Yes	107	39.19
		No	166	60.81
	Private micro finance	Yes	11	4.03
	Institution	No	262	95.97
	Own funds	Yes	228	83.52
		No	45	16.48
	Other	Yes	10	3.66
		No	263	96.34
Need an extra job		Yes	123	45.05
		No	150	54.95
Type of additional employment desired	Other work in addition to the current job		98	82.35
	Other job to replace current job		19	15.97
	New job		0	0.00
	Other		2	1.68
			Average	SD
	Average monthly salary (in FCFA)		99224.95	334,219.4
	Number of hours of work (per day)		6.14	3.27

			Unemployment	
			Frequency	Proportion (%)
Category of work sought	Agriculture, forestry and fishing		26	20.00
	Construction		7	5.38
	Information and communication		5	3.85
	Financial and insurance activities		8	6.15
	Real estate activities		3	2.31
	Professional, scientific and technical activities		7	5.38
	Administrative and support activities		12	9.23
	Education		24	18.46
	Human health and social work activities		15	11.54
	Arts, Entertainment and Recreation		1	0.77
	Trade		22	16.92
Preferred job type	Paid employment		55	52.88
	Self-employment		49	47.12
Source of information used to search for a job	Employment Promotion Agencies	Yes	20	15.38
		No	110	84.62
	Newspapers, radio, television	Yes	75	57.69
		No	55	42.31
	On the Internet / Sites;	Yes	62	47.69
		No	68	52.31
	Families / Friends	Yes	94	72.31
		No	36	27.69
	Colleagues / professional networks	Yes	31	23.85
		No	99	76.15
	Verification on the building site	Yes	13	10.00
		No	117	90.00
	In the work agencies	Yes	5	3.85
		No	125	96.15
	At a job fair	Yes	2	1.54
		No	128	98.46
	Direct contact by the employer	Yes	18	13.85
		No	112	86.15
	Other	Yes	3	2.31
		No	127	97.69

SD means Standard Deviation

Source: Data collection, 2019

Perception and Level of Knowledge of Respondents on Youth Employment Initiatives

Level of knowledge and assessment of youth employment initiatives in rural Benin

During the quantitative survey, respondents were asked to name the employment initiatives of young people they knew outside the initiatives to which they belong. After analyzing the data, four initiatives were identified namely: the Agricultural Entrepreneurship Promotion Project (PPEA), the National Fund for the Promotion of Enterprise and Youth Employment (FNPEEJ), the various programs of the National Agency for Employment (ANPE programs) and Youth Employment Project (YEP). Table 8 presents the level of knowledge and the assessments made by the respondents on the initiatives.

➤PPEA

The analysis in Table 8 shows that PPEA was the best-known initiative among the four initiatives as indicated by 19.47% of respondents. Among the respondents that knew about PPEA, 36.07% indicated that they were very knowledgeable about the initiative and 45.08% said they are knowledgeable. Thus, over 81% of those who knew the PPEA had a good knowledge of the initiative. Most (80.33%) of the respondents were beneficiaries and showed keen interest in knowing more about the initiative through various sources. The five major sources of information in order of importance were, parents / friends (54.92%), newspapers, radio and television (41.80%), Internet / Sites (27.87%), Colleagues / Professional Networks (19.67%), and Employment Promotion Agencies (15.57%).

The evaluation of the implementation of PPEA by those familiar with the initiative was satisfactory (67.21%). However, about 12.30% of the respondents were, not satisfied with the implementation of the PPEA. In addition, 77.67% of those who knew the initiative believed that PPEA was effective, while 11.48% believed that the project did not live up to the expectations put in it and regarded it as not effective.

➤FNPEEJ

Table 8 reveals that only 9.19% of respondents knew the FNPEEJ. Among the respondents that knew about the initiative, 45.76% of them were knowledgeable of the initiative, 15.25% were very knowledgeable of the initiative and 11.86% and 27.12%, reported being not well informed and have some knowledge of the initiative, respectively. Newspapers, radio and television were the major media by which 54.24% of the respondents got to know about FNPEEJ while 50.85% knew through their parents / friends. Other sources such as Internet / Sites (28.81%), Employment Promotion Agencies (ANPE Example) (18.54%) and Colleagues / Professional Networks (15.25%) were also reported.

Only 33.90% of the respondents who knew the FNPEEJ benefited from the initiative and 54.24% assessed its implementation as generally satisfactory, while 32.20% considered the implementation as unsatisfactory. The actors reported that the first years of implementation of the fund resulted in several malpractices, especially at the level of the beneficiaries (high default rate, diversion of loans to other activities, non-compliance with the criteria and

partiality in the process of granting of loans. However, 77.87% of those who knew the initiative said it was effective.

➤ **ANPE Programs**

The National Employment Agency is a state structure that runs several projects and programs promoting youth employment. The results of Table 8 show that only 11.21% of respondents knew the ANPE and its programs. About 38.89% and 9.72% of the respondents that knew about the program, consider themselves to be well informed and very well informed, respectively. Only, a minority of people (12.5%) said they were not well informed of the initiative. Of note is that 54.17% of those who knew the ANPE and its various programs were not beneficiaries. This is an indication that the ANPE was really a national structure and center information on employment. From the analysis of the results, the main sources of information used were newspapers, radio and television (61.11%), Friends/Parents (48.61%) and employment promotion agencies (19.44%).

The respondent’s assessment of the implementation of the initiative was generally satisfactory, while 56.94% of those who were aware of the initiative indicated dissatisfaction with the program implementation. In addition, like FNPEEJ and PPEA, 73.61% of those who knew the initiative believed it was effective.

➤ **PEJ**

Table 8 revealed that few respondents were aware of the Youth Employment Project. About 41.54% indicated that they were well informed, while only 4.62% indicated they were not well informed about the project. The main sources of information used in order of importance were: newspapers, radio and television (52.31%), Friends / Parents (49.23%), Internet / Sites (20.54%), Colleagues/Professional Networks (20%) and Employment Promotion Agencies (20%). The PEJ is one of the flagship projects of the current government and is being implemented. However, the assessment made by the respondents showed that the program is very good. In fact, the initiative with the highest rate of respondents (32.31%) declares to be completely satisfied with its implementation. In addition, 21.54% and 69.23% of those who were aware of the initiative reported that the PEJ is very effective.

Table 8: Knowledge and appreciation of youth employment initiatives

Initiatives		PPEA	FNPEEJ	ANPE	PEJ
Knowledge	Yes	19.47	9.19	11.21	10.12
	No	80.53	90.81	88.79	89.88
Assessment of the level of knowledge on this initiative	Not well informed	4.10	11.86	12.50	4.62
	Some knowledge	14.75	27.12	38.89	29.23
	Well informed	45.08	45.76	38.89	41.54
	Very well informed	36.07	15.25	9.72	24.62
Source of information	Employment Promotion Agencies (Example ANPE)	15.57	18.64	19.44	20
	Newspapers, radio, television	41,80	54.24	61.11	52.31
	On the Internet / Sites	27.87	28.81	13.89	21.54

	Families / Friends	54.92	50.85	48.61	49.23
	Colleagues / professional networks	19.67	15.25	11.11	20
	Verification of a job available on construction sites	0.82	0	1.39	0
	In the work agencies	3.28	8.47	2.78	1.54
	At a job fair	4.10	6.78	0	1.54
	Direct contact by the employer	2.46	5.08	4.17	4.62
Status of the respondent	Beneficiary	80.33	33,90	45.83	44.62
	No Beneficiary	19.67	66.10	54.17	55.38
Assessment / satisfaction of the implementation of the program	Fully satisfied / Very satisfied	20.49	13.56	22.22	32.31
	Unsatisfied / Satisfied	67.21	54.24	56.94	55.38
	Not satisfied	12,30	32.20	20.83	12,31
Effectiveness of the program	Not efficient	11.48	18.64	11.11	9.23
	Effective	77.87	72.78	73.61	69.23
	Very effective	10.66	8.47	15.28	21.54

Source: data collection, 2019

Respondent's perception of the effects of the implementation of youth employment initiatives

Table 9 presents the benefits obtained by the beneficiaries and the main effect on the community implementing youth employment initiatives. The analysis of the table showed that with regard to the PPEA, improving the level of knowledge of management techniques of farming was the main advantage obtained by the beneficiaries. Followed by obtaining of independent job / increase in the production capacity with financial support (60%), the desire to undertake (10.40%) and widening of professional network (5.60%). The PPEA first trained the selected beneficiaries before giving them a sum of 500,000 CFA francs for their business installation. Among the non-beneficiaries, the initiative was to stimulate in them the will to undertake. Majority (44.80%) of those who knew the PPEA believe that its main effect on the community / village was job creation, lower unemployment rate, and improved living conditions. Furthermore, 18.40% of those who knew about PPEA said the initiative helped their community to have more food. The initiative was able to achieve the following in the order of importance; the development of municipality, the change of mentality of the young (to have believe in agricultural entrepreneurship for the satisfaction of the basic needs) and the availability of competent trainers in the locality.

Unlike the PPEA, majority of respondents (33.90%) felt that the FNPEEJ did not provide them with any benefit. The study revealed the importance of the initiative in this order; obtaining a self-employed job / increase in production capacity due to financial support (23.73%) and improvement in the level of knowledge on farm management techniques (20.34%). As with

the benefits, majority of stakeholders surveyed who knew the FNPEEJ (40.68%) said that this initiative had no effect on the community / village. However, 40.68% of those who knew FNPEEJ believed that this initiative promoted job creation/ lowered unemployment rate and improved living conditions.

Majority of the respondents (33.33%) were able to obtain an improved knowledge of management techniques in farming under the ANPE program, followed by obtaining of an independent job, increased in production capacity due to financial support (16.44%) and the desire to undertake (5.56%). As for the FNPEEJ, majority of respondents (50.13%) believed that the various programs of the ANPE had no effect on their community / village. Nevertheless, 40.63% of respondents believed that the various programs of the ANPE have allowed the creation of employment, lowered unemployment rate and improved the living conditions in their communities / villages.

Finally, the Youth Employment Project, which was the most effective and most appreciated project according to the respondents, proved to be a project in which 41.54% of respondents stated that they did not benefit from its implementation. However, 53.85% and 24.62% of respondents who were aware of the initiative, respectively, reported the advantage of improving the level of knowledge of farm management techniques, obtained self-employment, increase of production capacity due to financial support. Like the other initiatives, the main effect of PEJ on the communities / villages was able to achieve the follows; created jobs / reduced unemployment rate and improved the living conditions of about 49.21% of respondents who knew the project. According to the results, the PEJ was the initiative that was most effective on the change of mentality of young people in the community (14.29%).

Table 9: Benefits and Effects of Implementing Youth Employment Initiatives

Initiatives	Modalities	PPEA	FNPEEJ	ANPE	PEJ
Benefits obtained	Improved level of knowledge of farm management techniques	79,20	20.34	33.33	53.85
	Obtaining self-employment / Increasing production capacity through financial support	60	23.73	16.44	24.62
	Expanding my professional network	5.60	1.69	-	7.69
	To stimulate the desire to undertake	10.40	3.39	5.56	6.15
	No advantage	2.40	33,90	29,17	41.54
Main effect in communities / villages	Better availability of agricultural products	18,40	8.47		1.59
	Job creation / Falling unemployment rate / Improvement of living conditions	44.80	40.68	40.63	49.21
	Change in the mentality of young people (Faith in agricultural entrepreneurship for the satisfaction of basic needs)	8	8.47	4.69	14.29
	Development of the municipality	12	1.69		11.11

Availability of competent trainers in the locality	4.80	-	1.56	1.59
No effect	12	40.68	53.13	22.22

Source: Data collection, 2019

Employment Opportunities for Untapped or Underutilized Youth

Sectors or areas of activity that have remained unexploited or under-exploited by survey respondents

Benin is a country with enormous potential for job creation for young people in rural areas. The analysis of the results in Table 10 showed that the agricultural sector is the sector of activity with the most employment potential for young people in rural areas but which remained under-exploited according to 48.33% of respondents. The latter were very familiar with the agricultural sector/ crop value chain as 49.23% and 27.69% of them respectively said they were well informed and very well informed about agricultural opportunities.

According to 24.16% of respondents, the livestock sector is the second sector of activity that has been underutilized. This is followed in order of importance by the service sector and non-agricultural goods (7.81%); the agricultural processing sector (5.95%); the agricultural trade sector (5.2%) and the craft sector (4.09%). The latter includes activities such as hairdressing, carpentry, masonry, and fashion designers. Whatever the sector of activity, more than 50% of respondents were well informed of existing opportunities except for the craft sector where it was noticed that 36.36% of respondents have little knowledge of existing opportunities in the craft industry.

Table 10: Underutilized or unexploited sectors of activity and level of information

Sector / Area of job opportunities for young people	Frequency (%)	Knowledge of opportunity areas (%)			
		Not well informed	Some knowledge	Well informed	Very well informed
Agriculture (crop production)	48.33	4.62	18.46	49.23	27.69
Breeding	24,16	1.54	26.15	49.23	23.08
Agri-food processing	5.95	0	18.75	50	31.25
Trade agricultural products	5.2	14.29	21.43	50	14.29
Trade in services and non-agricultural goods	7.81	9.52	28.57	38.10	23.81
Crafts (Sewing, Carpentry, Forging, etc.)	4.09	18.18	36.36	36.36	9.09

Source: Data collection, 2019.

Reasons why these sectors remained undeveloped or underutilized

Table 11 presents the reasons indicated by the respondents why the sectors of activity identified as potential job providers for rural youth have remained unexploited or under-exploited. It is important to note that, whatever the sector of activity, with the exception of the agricultural processing sector, the main reason for the under-exploitation of job opportunities was the lack of financial resources to invest or launch the activity. As for the processing of agricultural products, the main reason mentioned by 56.25% of the respondents was the lack of information on the existing opportunities in this sector, followed by insufficient financing for investment (50%) and insufficient state support measures (37.5%) including the availability of affordable electricity, the organization of the sector, technical follow-up, among others.

For the agricultural sector, the lack of funding was followed by the lack of willingness of young people / rigorous work was reported by 39.23% of respondents and insufficient information on existing opportunities in agriculture by 36.92% of the respondents.

With regard to the livestock, agricultural trade and handicrafts sectors, lack of information on the existing opportunities and insufficiency of state support measures represented the reasons for under-exploitation of the sectors. However, for handicrafts, the insufficiency of state support measures occupied third position with the lack of will of the young due to its rigorous.

Finally, the trade in services and non-agricultural goods sector was under-exploited because of the lack of information on the existing opportunities and the lack of willingness of the youth / hardship of work which occupies respectively the second (47, 62%) and the third (19.05%) place.

Table 11: Reasons for under-utilization of buoyant business sectors for rural youth.

Reasons	Agriculture	Breeding	Agricultural products processing	Trade in agricultural products	Trade Services and non-agricultural goods	Arts and crafts
Insufficient information on the opportunity	36.92	56.92	56.25	50	47.62	63.64
Insufficient funding to invest in the field	50.77	63.08	50	71.43	61.90	72.73
Lack of willpower / Work hardness	39.23	12,31	6.25	7.14	19.05	9.09
Difficult access to land / Land depletion	9.23	6.15	6.25	0	0	0

Insufficient state support measures (electricity, organization of the industry, insecurity / theft, etc.)	12,31	18.46	37.50	14.29	14.29	9.09
High risk / Return on investment not guaranteed	3.85	1.54	6.25	0	0	0
No reason	2.31	0	6.25	7.14	4.76	0

Source: data collection, 2019.

Suggested Solutions by respondents to enable young people to benefit from growth sectors

Solutions that can promote the integration of young people in sectors that will provide employment for rural youth were suggested by the respondents and summarized in Table 12. The main solution envisaged by respondents for the agricultural sector is the sensitization of young people on the existing job opportunities in the sector as proposed by 55.38% of the respondents. About 47.69% suggested the implementation of state measures that will facilitate financing. (Other measures that will promote training or improve the technical knowledge of young people that are interested in crop value chain were also recommended by 28.23% of the respondents. During the focus group discussions, several young people indicated the lack of financial to start their businesses and the reluctance of conventional financing structures such as traditional commercial banks and microfinance institutions to invest in the agricultural sector. Similarly, other young people indicated their desire to invest in the agricultural sector but lacked the necessary technical prerequisites as a major constraint.

Unlike the activities in the crop value chain of the agricultural sector, the main solution suggested by 64.62% of respondents for the livestock sector is the implementation of state measures favoring the financing of young people and the willingness of the youth to invest in this sector. This solution must be followed according to the investigators by training or improving the technical knowledge of young people (53.85%) and the creation of awareness about various job opportunities (32.31%).

The main solution suggested for the agricultural processing sector is the training of young people by 50% of respondents. About 43.75% suggested measures that will favor the financing of young people that are willing to invest in this sector (and 31.25% suggested the need to create awareness among young people about job opportunities.

With regard to the sectors of activity of trade in agricultural products, trade in services and non-agricultural goods and handicrafts, the main solution envisaged is the implementation of state measures that will favor the financing of young people according to 50%, 42%, 86%

and 36.36%, respectively. Specifically, for the craft sector, young people from rural areas believed that this solution should be placed at the same level as the awareness of young people on job opportunities and training / acquisition of technical knowledge by young people who want to invest in crafts. On the other hand, for the sectors of trade in agricultural products and trade in services and non-agricultural goods, the facilitation of access to finance must be followed in order of importance of the training of young people, 50% and 38.10%, respectively and their awareness of job opportunities 21.43% and 33.33% respectively, so that young people can make the most of the benefits of job-creating areas.

Table 12: Suggested Solutions that can promote the integration of young people into promising sectors

Proposed solutions	Agriculture	Breeding	Agricultural products processing	Trade in agricultural products	Trade Services and non-agricultural goods	Arts and crafts
Young people's awareness of job opportunities	55.38	32.31	31.25	21.43	33.33	36.36
State measures related to financing	47.69	64.62	43.75	50	42.86	36.36
State measures linked to mechanization and the reduction of the arduousness of agricultural activity	11.54	3.08	0	7.14	9.52	0
State measures related to land	6.55	4.62	0	0	4.76	0
Youth training	29.23	53.85	50	50	38.10	36.36
State measures linked to the organization of the sector (price fixing, facilitating market access, protecting farmers against exports, etc.)	5.38	3.08	18.75	7.14	9.52	9.09

No solution	4.62	0	6.25	7.14	4.76	9.09
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Source: data collection, 2019

Factors Influencing Youth Employment in Benin

Determinants of youth employment

Table 13 presents the results of the logistic model of the determinants of youth employment in rural Benin. The LR Chi2 statistic was significant at 1% level. It implies that the model is globally significant and the pseudo R2 is 16.89%. In the model, out of the 10 variables introduced, 5 variables significantly influence youth employment. These are age, sex, household size, number of people employed in the household and participation in job training, as well as time spent on social networks.

The results in the Table 13 showed that respondents with working household members were 3.3 times more likely to be employed. Moreover, the results indicated that participation in training program had positive influence at 1% level of threshold. Thus, for an increase in the number of people employed in the household, the probability of being employed by 2.35 times.

The odds ratio of age increased by 1.08 if the person is so young. This indicated that people with probably more age were more likely to get a job. These results were contrary to that of Abshoko (2016) and Shitaand Djedere (2018) who show that age increased the probability of non-employment. Similarly, Nganwa *et al.* (2015) have shown that an increase in age reduced the likelihood of being unemployed.

It was also observed that men were 0.50 times less likely to be employed than women. This result implies that gender has an influence on professional integration. The result was similar to the work of Oancea *et al.* (2016) but contrary to the result of Abshoko (2016) which showed that women were more likely to be unemployed than men in Romania.

Also, the probability of having a job decreased by 0.87 as the household size increased. It was obvious that a very large household will not favor professional integration for several reasons. The length of time spent on social networks negatively affected access to employment at 10% threshold. Social networks were 0.93 times less likely to have a job. People who spent most of their time on social networks do not seek employment opportunities but engage in other activities despite the fact that social networks are important for getting relevant information about different job opportunities. Shita and Djedere (2018) also revealed that social networks have a negative and significant impact on the unemployment of individuals.

Table 13: Logistic Regression Model Result of Determinants of Youth Unemployment Status in Benin

Variables	Coef.	Std. Err.	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.
Marital status	-0.25	0.32	0.78	0.25
Number of people employed in the household	1.20 ***	0.24	3.30	0.79
Information on job opportunities	0.15	0.23	1.16	0.27
Participation in training on employment	0.85 ***	0.23	2.35	0.54
Use of social networks	0.11	0.33	1.12	0.37
Sex (male)	-0.70 **	0.28	0.50	0.14
Age	0.08 **	0.03	1.08	0.03
Household size	-0.17 *	0.09	0.84	0.08
Number of years of study	-0.04	0.03	0.96	0.03
Time spent on social networks	-0.07 **	0.04	0.93	0.03
Constant	-0.58	1.08	0.56	0.60
Model Fitting Information				
Number of obs	642			
Wald chi2 (10)	72.97			
Pseudo R2	16.89			
Log likelihood	-268.81 ***			

***Significant at the threshold of 1%; **significant at the threshold of 5%, * significant at the threshold of 10%

Factors that controlling the type of employment in rural Benin

Table 14 presents the results of the multinomial logistic model of the determinants of youth employment in rural Benin. The pseudo R2 of 16.52% was weak and suggests a poor fit of the model. However, the LR Chi2 statistic was significant at the 1% level; this implies that the joint insertion of the different explanatory variables in the model was necessary to explain precisely the employment of young people and to contribute to the reduction of the error.

The table also revealed that the variables that had a statistically significant effect in differentiating between employed and unemployed youth were; age, level of education, participation in training for the unemployed employment, and geographical location. In addition, access to information on job opportunities allowed for a statistically significant effect on self-employment status and thus helped to differentiate young entrepreneurs from unemployed youth.

According to the results in Table 14, seniors were 1.13 times more likely to be employed than to be unemployed compared to younger people. Also, the elderly people were 1.06 times more likely to be self-employed compared to younger people. These results were in agreement with that of Blackaby *et al.*, (1999). Young people often face discriminatory practices related to their work experience on the part of employers (Baah-Boateng, 2013). It is common for older people to be preferred to younger people because of their higher work

experience or exposure to the Labor market. Also, this result could be explained by the fact that people of a certain age are more competent than younger people (Sackey and Osei, 2006). More so, older people are more likely to have achieved a high level of formal education to qualify for formal employment. In addition, the mismatch between training and employment sought by job-creating firms is also an important component of the high incidence of unemployment among the youth. As a result, many young people find themselves confronted each year with the lack of job offers in their field of training.

It was also observed that young people at the 1st and 2nd levels of general education were 1.45 and 1.53 times, respectively, more likely to be in paid employment compared to their unemployed counterparts having reached the primary level. On the other hand, at the level of self-employment, the results suggested that young people with university education, 1st and 2nd general education respectively had 0.12; 0.19 and 0.21 times less likely to be self-employed than to be unemployed compared to their counterparts at the primary level. The result corroborates the result of Msigwa and Kipesha (2013) who found with empirical evidence that general education in Tanzania improved the chances for young people to have a job. However, the probability of young Tanzanians to have a job increases as soon as primary education ends. This is contrary to the situation in Benin, young people are given a chance to have a paid job when they are at the level of general secondary education 1st cycle. The younger people move into general education, the more they acquire the necessary technical and theoretical skills for salaried jobs in the formal sector. Jobs in the Beninese public sector are very selective and can be obtained through competitions. Thus, young people are often limited in obtaining such a job without a significant level of formal education. The other aspect of the results is that the level of formal education is negatively and significantly related to obtaining a self-employment job. The results are in agreement with that of Baah-Boateng (2013), Sackey and Osei (2006) and Dickens and Lang (1995) who found that people who have reached primary level or secondary formal education were more likely to be unemployed than to be employed. This is explained by the fact that educated young people (secondary level and above) value less the jobs in agriculture or crafts which constituted the great pools of self-employment in Benin. Thus, contented with family assistance while hoping for a well-paid salaried job in the formal public or private sector. Descriptive statistics revealed the lack of willingness of youth as one of the reasons for the inoperability of employment opportunities in the sub-sectors of agriculture and livestock and crafts in Benin.

The results also showed that participation in job training increases the probability of having a job by 1.58 as opposed to being unemployed. Similarly, the odds for people participating in job training to obtain self-employment is 4.06 times higher than their counterparts who do not receive any in training on employment as involvement in training gives you the skills you need to meet the demands of employers or start your own business. Baah-Boateng (2013) reported that young people are often slowed down to pursue self-employment because of the lack of start-up capital and the specific skills needed. Participation in training on employment or skills development is therefore a determinant of employment status as found by Msigwa and Kipesha (2013) in Tanzania, Awogbenle and Iwuamandi (2010) in Nigeria and Mlatshani and Rospabe (2002) in South Africa. However, as young people

acquire skills in Tanzania, they are more likely to be unemployed (Msigwa and Kipasha, 2013). This analysis considered the acquisition of more skills in higher education institutions such as universities and colleges that are not likely to promote the creation of self-employment.

The present study also indicated that young people with access to information on job opportunities were 4.66 times more likely to be self-employed than to be unemployed. Access to information on job opportunities allowed young people to get in touch with projects/ programs/institutions that promote employability through self-employment (e.g. agricultural entrepreneurship promotion project, the youth employment project, the self-employment support program, and others. These different projects try to solve problems of unemployment according to their objectives such as, the constraints related to skills through training also, constraints related to the start-up fund activity or the increase of production capacity to satisfy a given market. This substantial support is likely to improve the employability of young people in self-employment.

In terms of geographic location, the results from the multinomial model indicated that young people residing in the Atlantic Department had 2.01 times and 4.05 times chances of obtaining paid and self-employment jobs, respectively, than to be unemployed compared to young people in the Department of Alibori. The result can be explained by the fact that young people in the Atlantic Department are closer to the urban metropolis or the economic capital "Cotonou" having easier access to information on specific training opportunities and start-up credits to start an independent job as access to information on opportunities being a determinant of youth employability. The same applies to salaried employment. Closeness to urban cities allows quick access to information on job opportunities through professional networks, friends and more importantly, parents.

Table 14: Multinomial Regression Model results in Benin

Outcome	Variables	Coef.	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	
Paid employment	Age	0.12***	1.13	0.03	
	Sex	-0.14	0.87	0.21	
	Level of education	University	0.41	1.51	0.79
		Secondary school 2	1.05**	2.86	1.53
		Secondary school 1	0.97*	2.63	1.45
		Primary (reference)			
	No formal education	-0.52	0.60	0.90	
	Participation in training on employment	0.46*	1.58	0.38	
	Information on job opportunities	-0.30	0.74	0.18	
	Size of household	-0.04	0.96	0.03	
	Use of social networks	0.06	1.06	0.36	
	Time spent on social networks	-0.05	0.95	0.04	
	Geographic location	Alibori (reference)			
Borgou		-0.65	0.52	0.22	
Atlantic		0.70*	2.01	0.84	
Oueme		0.10	1.11	0.46	

	Constant		-3.21	0.04	0.04	
Self-employment	Age		0.06*	1.06	0.03	
	Sex		0.48	1.61	0.48	
	Level of education	University		-1.56***	0.21	0.12
		Secondary school 2		-1.08*	0.34	0.19
		Secondary school 1		-1.06*	0.35	0.21
		Primary(reference)				
	No formal education		0.83	2.30	2.86	
	Participation in training on employment		1.40***	4.06	1.12	
	Information on job opportunities		1.54***	4.66	1.34	
	Size of household		-0.04	0.96	0.04	
Use of social networks		-0.04	0.95	0.38		
Time spent on social networks		0.01	1.01	0.04		
Geographic location	Alibori (reference)					
	Borgou		0.26	1.29	0.68	
	Atlantic		1.39***	4.05	2.04	
	Oueme		0.76	2.14	1.11	
	Constant		-2.67	0.07	0.07	
(Reference outcome "Unemployed")						
Model Fitting Information						
	Number of obs		642			
	LR chi2 (28)		219.42***			
	Pseudo R2		16.52%			
	Log likelihood		-554.37			

***Significant at the threshold of 1%; **significant at the threshold of 5%, * significant at the threshold of 10%

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study was carried out to identify measures that could improve the opportunities of employment and income generation among rural youth in Africa and Benin. Several initiatives have been implemented with the aim of improving the integration of young people into the Labor market. The initiatives have several axes namely; to develop the skills of management and entrepreneurship, also to complement professional training by upgrading and leadership. The fundamental problem is the educational system which has not associated entrepreneurship with training and young people are still having the orientation of getting a salaried job. Government policies have focused on the development of the public-private partnership, which facilitates the integration of young people. Other initiatives focused on entrepreneurship in various fields such as agriculture, crafts and trade. Descriptive statistics have shown that the dominant activity was agriculture. In addition, majority of young people attained university level, which means that young people were well educated. The Four initiatives known by young people were, PEJ, PPEA, ANPE and FNPEEJ.

To identify factors influencing youth employment in Benin, the study used both the models of binary and multinomial logistic regression. It could be said that the level of education, age, sex, participation in training on employment, area of residence, information on job opportunities, access to social networks were important factors in explaining the differences in employment status of young people in Benin.

The study also showed that participation in job training was a key determinant of employment and that young men had more chances of unemployment compared to young women. Youth with a high school education were more employed compared to those with low education or without education. The study revealed that young people with access to information on job opportunities chose to be self-employed.

The location of young people was a determining factor for youth employment. The study showed that young people in the Atlantic Department had more chances to have paid employment and self - employment opportunities rather than to be unemployed compared to young people in the Alibori Department. The job opportunities were more in the Atlantic Department.

Several recommendations emerged based on the results of the survey. The recommendations are oriented toward the government and the political decision-makers. That adequate training in association with practical session in teachings should be encouraged as this will facilitate easy incorporation of the young people in the labor market. Also, relevant laws on the employment of young people should also be passed and implemented at the National Assembly so that the firms can recruit young people trained from schools and universities. The survey showed that young people that only attained secondary education level had more opportunity to find a job than those with University education.

The government should also encourage the training of the young people on job hunting to allow them to be active and not to wait for the recruitments of states or enterprises but to be able to generate income from other activities. This would be made possible with the implementation of innovative projects. The problem of gender is also very important, the government should ensure that companies recruit according to expertise and avoid discrimination based on sex. Platforms for regular updates about job opportunities should be made available. Finally, sensitizing the young people on the benefits of social networks will go a long way in job acquisition rather than wasting of precious time as this could be done by teachers in schools.

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