



FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA



NIGERIAN YOUTH EMPLOYMENT ACTION PLAN

2021
—
2024





FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

NIGERIAN YOUTH EMPLOYMENT ACTION PLAN (NIYEAP) 2021-2024

**Federal Ministry of Youth
and Sports Development**

Abuja

2021

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Abbreviations

AFDB	African Development Bank
ERGP	Economic Recovery and Growth Plan
FMYSD	Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NDEPS	National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy
NEP	National Employment Policy
NIRP	Nigerian Industrial Revolution Plan
NIYEAP	Nigerian Youth Employment Action Plan
NYP	National Youth Policy
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNSDPF	United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework

Foreword

Youth employment remains one of the defining challenges of our time, not just in Nigeria, but across West Africa and beyond. Addressing youth employment means finding solutions with and for young people who are seeking a decent and productive job, are working but living in poverty or are discouraged by current labour market prospects. Such solutions should address both labour supply (through education, skills development and training) and labour demand (through job creation and an enabling environment for entrepreneurship), as well as the quality of work available for young people (including with regard to labour standards, working conditions and wages).

The labour market situation of young people in Nigeria is also affected by developments that go beyond national borders, such as population growth, climate change, migration, innovation and automation, and which call for bold and urgent action by all relevant stakeholders. More recently, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures put in place to contain it have put additional strain on the economy, the labour market and the employment prospects of young people.

Nigeria remains committed to ensuring decent and productive work for young people. The National Employment Policy, the National Youth Policy and the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy emphasize the centrality and potential of job creation for young people.

At the global level, Nigeria supports the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and became the first government partner from Africa to make a commitment towards the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth.

In August 2019, Nigeria hosted the Global Youth Employment Forum, organized by the International Labour Organization. The Forum resulted in the Abuja Youth Statement, a strong call by young people for increased and transformative action on youth employment.

Yet finding a decent and productive job when entering the labour market in Nigeria remains a challenging task. Through the Nigerian Youth Employment Action Plan for the period 2021 to 2024, the Government of Nigeria aims to address this situation by focusing our joint efforts on a number of priority areas for action, areas with high potential for the creation of decent jobs for youth.

By bringing relevant stakeholders, including young people, together in the operationalization of this Plan, it is hoped that we can: move from individual interventions to a more coordinated approach in select priority areas; strengthen institutional capacity for improved service delivery; focus on specific thematic areas and youth subgroups; capitalize on a youthful, educated and innovative generation of young people eager to achieve their aspirations; and address the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sunday Dare

Honourable Minister of Youth and Sports Development
Federal Republic of Nigeria

August 31, 2021



INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Youth employment has been of great concern to the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria over the years. It was for this reason that the Nigerian Youth Employment Action Plan (NIYEAP) for the period 2009 to 2011 was initiated with a view to enable Nigeria to respond more effectively to the challenge of youth employment confronting the country. The urgent need to mobilize the full energy and capacity of the youth to achieve the national development goals, and to minimize the risks to national security and development posed by rising youth unemployment and underemployment, were also part of the reasons for the development of the NIYEAP (2009-2011).

The NIYEAP (2009-2011) supported efforts of the Government of Nigeria aimed at creating an enabling environment for youth employment. This Action Plan, which had modest achievements, has outlived its relevance in view of current realities. Moreover, the issues of human capital development and employment generation have been prioritized by the Government in the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), the National Youth Policy (2019) and the National Employment Policy (2017).

The NIYEAP serves as a commitment of the Government of Nigeria under the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, which was launched in 2016 as a multi-stakeholder partnership to advance the implementation of youth-employment-related targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a particular focus on digital skills, quality apprenticeships, green jobs and the rural economy, the transition to the formal economy, youth in fragile situations and youth entrepreneurship.

The 2030 Agenda highlights the centrality of youth development and employment through a number of targets across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).¹ Youth empowerment and employment is a priority area within the African Union's Agenda 2063. The Youth 2030 Strategy that the United Nations (UN) launched in September 2018 seeks to ensure the engagement of young people in the advancement of the SDGs. It formulates five priorities, including young people's access to decent work and productive employment.² The Call for Action adopted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2012 provides guiding principles on addressing youth employment in the areas of employment and economic policies, employability, labour market policies, youth entrepreneurship and self-employment, and rights for young people.³

The revised NIYEAP (2021-2024) aims to address the youth employment challenge in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. The review of the previous Action Plan was an attempt to benefit from lessons learned, build on existing frameworks and strategies, align interventions, create synergies and involve all relevant stakeholders in the identification of key priority areas and interventions on youth employment. The NIYEAP (2021-2024) also aims to contribute to the achievement of the Job Creation target of the National Youth Policy (2019) to create 3.7 million jobs annually from 2019 to 2023.

During the review process, consultative meetings were held in Abuja, Jos and Benin City, and a validation meeting was held to bring together the Government, youth representatives, social partners and international organizations. A multi-stakeholder meeting held in Abuja elaborated on key priorities and steps to be taken for joint and coordinated implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Led by the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development (FMYSD), this process has been supported by the Economic Community of West African States, the Spanish Agency for

¹ These include the following targets: 4.4, on skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship; 8.5, on full and productive employment and decent work, including for young people and persons with disabilities; and 8.6, on youth not in employment, education or training.

² UN, *Youth 2030: Working with and for Young People* (2018).

³ ILO, *The Youth Employment Crisis: A Call for Action*. Resolution and conclusions of the 101st Session of the International Labour Conference (2012).

International Development Cooperation (AECID) and the ILO. Since early 2020, a project⁴ funded by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund and jointly implemented by the ILO and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs has been supporting the capacity of youth and youth employment stakeholders in Nigeria for participatory implementation and monitoring of the NIYEAP.

The NIYEAP for the period 2021 to 2024 is a confirmation of Nigeria's commitment to tackle youth employment and contribute to national, regional and global development goals. It complements and operates in the context of existing policies, frameworks and strategies, such as the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), the National Youth Policy (NYP), the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy, the National Employment Policy (NEP), the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (UNSDPF) and the Call for Action. It also aims to guide the work of relevant institutions of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, civil society, youth organizations and development partners in the promotion of decent jobs for youth, and intends to inform the development of related programmes, initiatives and budgets in a complementary and sustained manner. The priority sectors of the ERGP also informed the identification of viable economic sectors for job creation for youth including agriculture, manufacturing, construction, digital economy and services.

In line with the NYP, the term "youth" refers to people between the ages of 15 and 29. Other age brackets referenced throughout this document are based on the availability of data.

This document is divided into three parts: Part I provides a situational analysis, with a particular focus on young people; Part II identifies strategic lines of action around the "four Es": Employability, Entrepreneurship, Employment, and Equality and rights; and Part III provides information on implementation arrangements.



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⁴ The project title is "Strengthening the capacity of governments and youth employment stakeholders in Africa in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes promoting decent jobs for youth".

PART

1

SITUATIONAL
ANALYSIS

Part 1. Situational analysis

1.1. Macroeconomic and sectoral trends

With an estimated 199 million inhabitants (2017), Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. Rapid population growth – at around 3 per cent per year – has resulted in a youthful population, of which some 42 per cent are below the age of 15 and another 29 per cent are between the ages of 15 and 29 (2017). It is expected that Nigeria’s population will grow by some 200 million people by 2050.⁵

Nigeria also has the largest economy in Africa⁶ and recorded relatively strong economic growth prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Between 2007 and 2014, the Nigerian economy grew by an average of 6.3 per cent per year. In 2015, growth slowed to 2.8 per cent before contracting by 1.6 per cent in 2016. Since then, the economy had returned to growth at a rate of 0.8 per cent in 2017, 1.9 per cent in 2018 and 2.3 per cent in 2019. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, real gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to have contracted by 1.9 per cent in 2020.⁷

1.1.1. Agriculture

In 2017, agriculture contributed 24 per cent to Nigeria’s GDP. While the agricultural sector still accounts for the highest share of employment (48 per cent as of 2017), its relative importance has decreased in recent years. In the decade from 2007 to 2016, the employment share in agriculture decreased by 8.7 percentage points, while in manufacturing (plus 3.3 percentage points), trade (plus 2.5 percentage points) and construction (plus 1.3 percentage points) the share was growing.⁸ However, the sector remains of key importance for generating incomes and sustaining livelihoods. Transforming the sector from low to high productivity will go a long way in transforming the Nigerian economy and addressing the youth employment challenge.⁹

Development constraints in the agricultural sector include: high levels of informality and working poverty; low yields and productivity; a lack of inputs; reliance on rain-fed farming; post-harvest losses; limited infrastructure and storage/processing capacity; aging agricultural populations; limited access to finance; climate change; and insecurity.¹⁰ More recently, the sector has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, including through increased prices of and limitations on access to farming inputs.¹¹

⁵ National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), *2018 Statistical Report on Women and Men in Nigeria* (February 2018); United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Population Prospects 2019* (2019).

⁶ African Development Bank (AfDB), *Africa’s Economic Outlook 2019* (2019), p. 7.

⁷ NBS, *GDP by Production Backcasting series (1981 to 2017) post rebasing*; NBS, *Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report (Q4 and Full Year 2018)* (February 2019); NBS, *Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report (Q1 2020)* (May 2020); NBS, *Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report (Q4 and Full Year 2020)* (February 2021).

⁸ Calculations based on Nigeria General Household Survey and ILO estimates; NBS, *Labour Force Statistics: Employment by Sector Report (Q3 2017)* (January 2018).

⁹ Bruno Losch, “Structural Transformation to Boost Youth Labour Demand in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Role of Agriculture, Rural Areas and Territorial Development”, ILO Employment Policy Working Paper No. 204 (2016), p. 2; NBS in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the World Bank, *LSMS-Integrated Surveys on Agriculture General Household Survey Panel: 2015/2016* (2016); NBS, *Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report (Q1 2020)* (May 2020).

¹⁰ Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (2017-2020) (2017); Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan for Job Creation and Youth Employment in Nigeria (2016); UN Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (2017); National Employment Policy (2017); PWC, *Transforming Nigeria’s Agricultural Value Chain: A Case Study of the Coca and Dairy Industries* (2017); AfDB, “Nigeria Economic Outlook” (2021).

¹¹ NBS, *COVID-19 Impact Monitoring* (July 2020).

The ERGP sees high potential in domestic demand, import substitution, and better yields and processing, and aims to increase the contribution of agriculture to GDP and the promotion of exports.¹² The NYP aims to promote youth in agriculture for social development and food security, and proposes action in the areas of access to land, finance and credit, infrastructure for agribusinesses and employment.¹³ The NEP includes an objective on engaging youth and women in agriculture-based entrepreneurship.¹⁴

1.1.2. Industry

Industry accounted for around 21 per cent of GDP in 2020 and employed approximately 7 per cent of the Nigerian workforce (in 2017).¹⁵ However, the contribution of manufacturing to exports remains low.¹⁶ Identified challenges regarding manufacturing relate to infrastructure, access to finance and credit, unreliable power supply and a challenging business environment.

Manufacturing provides an opportunity for both employment creation and the diversification of the economy. The ERGP refers to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, foreign exchange earnings, local content, technology and innovation, as well as the sector's employment share.¹⁷ The Nigerian Industrial Revolution Plan (NIRP) seeks to promote industry as a key employment and income generator, including through the identification of priority sectors and the promotion of competitiveness.¹⁸ The NEP aims to promote manufacturing, which at 9 per cent of GDP is a sizable subsector of the Nigerian economy, in particular in the textiles sector.¹⁹

In 2020, the oil sector (as compared to the non-oil sector) contributed 8.16 per cent to real GDP. The contribution of oil and gas to export earnings and government revenues remained significant, which highlights the need for economic diversification. The share of the workforce employed in the mining and quarrying sector remains negligible, at 0.17 per cent in 2017.²⁰

The National Industrial Policy and Competitiveness Advisory Council, inaugurated by the Government in 2017, adopted five priority areas: policy and regulation, trade and markets, critical infrastructure, skills and capacity building, and financing.

1.1.3. Services

The services sector contributes some 54 per cent to GDP and accounts for almost 45 per cent of the working population.²¹ The sector has potential for job creation, skills development, income generation, innovation and the expansion of markets.²² Existing frameworks highlight opportunities, including in the areas of telecommunications, information and communication technology (ICT),

¹² ERGP, pp. 55, 93.

¹³ NYP, p. 38.

¹⁴ NEP 2017; as of p. 27; Chapter 4.3.1.2, p. 28.

¹⁵ NBS, Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report (Q4 and Full Year 2020) (February 2021); *Labour Force Statistics: Employment by Sector Report (Q3 2017)* (January 2018).

¹⁶ ERGP, p. 10.

¹⁷ ERGP, pp. 15, 57.

¹⁸ NIRP, pp. 7, 8.

¹⁹ NEP, p. 30.

²⁰ NBS, Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report (Q4 and Full Year 2020) (February 2021); *Labour Force Statistics: Employment by Sector Report (Q3 2017)* (January 2018); ERGP, p. 67.

²¹ NBS, *Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report (Q2 2020)* (August 2020); *Labour Force Statistics: Employment by Sector Report (Q3 2017)* (January 2018).

²² NIRP, p. 8; PwC Nigeria, *Structural Transformation and Jobless Growth in Nigeria* (May 2018).

digital services, creative industries, finance, tourism, retail and trade, service provision and engineering.²³ Identified challenges relate to infrastructure, access to finance, informality, quality standards, security and investments.²⁴

The ERGP sees services as one of the “youth-dominated” sectors and proposes strategies that focus on ICT and technology development, financial services, creative industries and tourism.²⁵ It also emphasizes that trade is easily accessible.²⁶ The potential of the film and tourism industries should be leveraged and reference is made to Nigeria’s biodiversity, national parks, cultural heritage and arts and crafts.²⁷ The Digital Services Development and Promotion pillar of the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy aims to support an innovative digital ecosystem (see box 1 for more information on the digital economy).²⁸

As part of the service sector, construction contributed almost 4 per cent to real GDP in 2019 and employed some 2 per cent of the working population in 2017.²⁹ The sector increasingly attracts young workers and is prioritized by the ERGP to promote employment for young people.³⁰ The sector is labour intensive and offers opportunities for job creation through the development of infrastructure. The Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan for Job Creation and Youth Employment in Nigeria (the “Strategic Framework”) had identified construction as one of four sectors to promote job creation.³¹



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²³ ERGP, p. 63; NIRP, p. 55; Strategic Framework, p. 31; National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (2020–2030) (NDEPS), p. 18.

²⁴ Strategic Framework, p. 33; ERGP, p. 64.

²⁵ ERGP, pp. 64, 92.

²⁶ ERGP, p. 93.

²⁷ NEP, pp. 31, 32; ERGP, p. 64.

²⁸ NDEPS, pp. 31–32.

²⁹ NBS, *Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report (Q2 2020)* (August 2020); *Labour Force Statistics: Employment by Sector Report (Q3 2017)* (January 2018).

³⁰ ILO, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2017 (GET Youth 2017)*, p. 41.

³¹ NIRP, p. 52; Strategic Framework, pp. 18, 26.

Box 1: The digital economy in Nigeria

The digital economy is rapidly transforming job profiles and corresponding skill requirements across sectors. It presents opportunities for job creation, economic growth and productivity. The ERGP refers to ICT, along with services and creative industries, as a sector dominated by youth. It calls for a digital-led growth strategy, promoting internet penetration, ICT clusters and skills development, among other initiatives. ICT and digital technology was also one of the priority sectors identified by the Strategic Framework, which further highlights the job creation potential of content development, manufacturing and repairs, as well as services.

The National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy highlights the contribution of ICT to Nigeria's GDP, the centrality of digitally literate and skilled citizens and the promotion of digital jobs and entrepreneurs, among other issues. The eight pillars of the policy and strategy cover digital literacy and skills development, infrastructure development, digital services development and promotion, and indigenous content development and adoption.

Sources: ERGP, pp. 12, 13, 63, 65, 93; Strategic Framework, pp. 29, 30; NIRP, p. 55; NBS, *Labour Force Statistics: Employment by Sector Report (Q3 2017)* (January 2018); NBS, *Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report (Q2 2020)* (2020); NDEPS, p. 16; NBS, *Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report (Q2 2020)* (August 2020); World Bank, *Nigeria Digital Economy Diagnostic Report* (2019).

Other national frameworks identified similar priority areas, including education and skills development, infrastructure, internet/broadband, technology hubs, local content and data protection.

While the information and communication sector already contributed around 9 per cent to GDP in 2017, its share of employment was less than 1 per cent in 2017. In 2019, the sector grew by some 11 per cent in real terms, and, according to the digital economy policy and strategy, emerged as the "most important long-term growth prospect" for Nigeria's GDP. While GDP decreased in most sectors in the second quarter of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, information and communication grew by 15 per cent compared with the second quarter in 2019, further highlighting the potential of this sector.

Challenges with regard to the digital economy in Nigeria relate to (digital) infrastructure and devices, power supply, institutional frameworks, educational practices and digital literacy and skills.

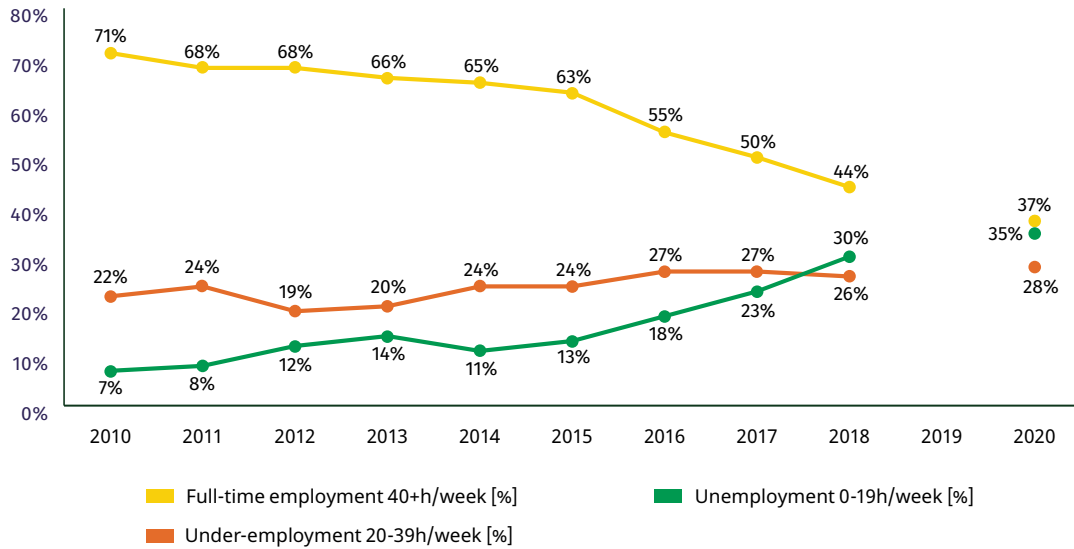
1.2. Key youth employment indicators

Economic growth in Nigeria over recent years has not resulted in a rapid reduction of poverty or in the creation of sufficient decent jobs for the young and rapidly growing labour force.

From 2010 to 2020, unemployment rates as defined by the National Bureau of Statistics consistently increased for young people (figure 1).³² As of 2020 (Q2), youth unemployment (15–34 years old) stood at 35 per cent. A further 28 per cent of young people in the labour force were considered underemployed (working 20–39 hours a week) and 37 per cent were working full time (40 or more hours per week). While a precise estimate of the labour market impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Nigeria is outstanding, the pandemic is expected to have put additional strains on youth labour markets.

³² A person within the considered age group is unemployed if they were available for work and were actively seeking work but were not working or were working less than 20 hours a week. The trends for youths in the 15–24 years age group are qualitatively similar over the same period.

Figure 1. Youth (15–34 years old) employment, unemployment and underemployment rates, 2010–2020 (percentage)



Note: For years for which quarterly data are available, the figure plots the average values. No data are available for 2019. Data for 2020 are from the second quarter (the survey was conducted using a computer-assisted telephone interview system).

Source: NBS, Labor Force Statistics: *Unemployment/Underemployment Report (Q4 2016) (June 2017)*; Labour Force Statistics: *Volume I: Unemployment and Underemployment Report (Q4 2017–Q3 2018) (December 2018)*; *Unemployment and Underemployment Report. Abridged Labour Force Survey under COVID-19 (Q2 2020) (August 2020)*.

In line with the youth unemployment trends, a large share of the young women and men in Nigeria fall within the category of not in employment, education or training (NEET). The NEET rate captures young people who are unemployed and those who are not economically active and are not studying, which includes discouraged young people who are not actively looking for employment.³³ Reducing the proportion of youth that fall within the NEET category has been included as a target under SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth (target 8.6).³⁴

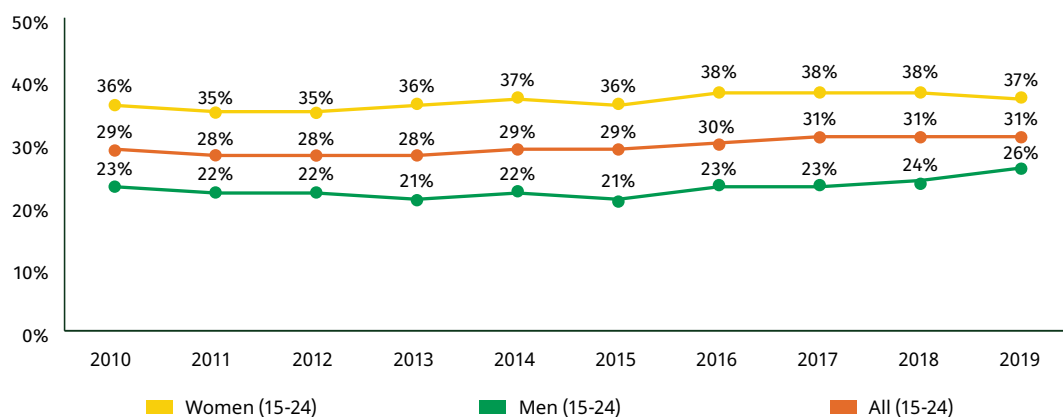
Thus, the NEET rate shows the underutilization of Nigerian youth, who could otherwise contribute to growth and development through their education or employment.³⁵ As of 2019, 31 per cent of young people aged between 15 and 24 were estimated to fall in the NEET category (figure 2). The NEET rate was considerably higher among young women (37 per cent in 2019) than young men (26 per cent). This substantial gender gap has appeared consistently over the past decade, highlighting the need to boost labour market participation among young women.

³³ ILO, *GET Youth 2017*.

³⁴ SDG Target 8.6: “By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training”.

³⁵ ILO, *GET Youth 2017*.

Figure 2. Youth (15–24 years old) not in employment, education or training (NEET), 2010–2019 (percentage)



Source: ILOSTAT.

Furthermore, employment for young workers continues to be characterized by decent work deficits, such as informality and working poverty. The share of informal employment in Nigeria has been estimated to be around 93 per cent.³⁶ Across the region, some 95 per cent of young workers were estimated to be in informal employment in 2018. In addition, some 63 per cent of young workers in Africa were estimated to be living in poverty in 2020 (people above the age of 25 were less likely to be affected by working poverty).³⁷

1.3. Labour market aspirations of Nigerian youth

To gather young people’s aspirations and perspectives on the world of work, the Nigeria Youth SDGs Network conducted a nationwide survey among young women and men (2020) in collaboration with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the ILO and the FMYSO. The data collection was part of a broader outreach campaign, which aimed to further strengthen youth engagement and enable young women and men to provide inputs and insights for the NIYEAP. Youth (aged 15 to 29) across all 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory were surveyed online and offline. Over 100,000 young women and men completed the questionnaire on their aspirations and their opinions about their place in the labour market.³⁸

When asked what they believed to be most important for finding a decent job, young people stated completing education (formal education, apprenticeships, vocational training) as the number one factor. This view was held more frequently among young women (45 per cent) than young men (38 per cent). By contrast, young men more frequently indicated that the ability to fund a business is crucial (27 per cent, compared with 19 per cent among young women). Taken together, 37 per cent of young people either think that funding for a business or having the right training to know how to start a business are most important to obtain a decent job. This highlights the importance of quality education in enabling a swift transition from school to work. Technical vocational education and training (TVET) is one offering of Nigeria’s education system that can provide a route to improved employability and achieve the transition to the labour market (see Box 2 for more information on education and TVET in Nigeria).

³⁶ ILO, *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture* (third edition) (2018).

³⁷ ILO, *Report on employment in Africa (Re-Africa): Tackling the youth employment challenge* (2020).

³⁸ Data were collected from May to June 2020 through an online questionnaire, face-to-face interviews carried out by youth volunteers, and relying on U-Report (an SMS-based platform), in collaboration with UNICEF. A total of 106,014 young people provided complete information on all questions. This sample of respondents forms the basis of the analysis presented in this document.

Box 2: Education and TVET in Nigeria

Access to quality primary education contributes to the development of basic skills that are the foundation for further learning. These skills are fundamental for future academic or technical vocational education and training (TVET), which can provide an individual route to achieve employability. As employability also depends on labour market demand, improving the labour market relevance of education outcomes requires close alignment between the skills that are taught and the skills which are in demand.

In Nigeria, the education system faces a number of challenges, ranging from access and quality to infrastructure. Despite high enrolment rates, a large number of children remain out of school, and primary education does not always equip students with adequate basic skills.² The literacy rate of young people aged 15 to 24 is about 75 per cent, and the rate is lower among young women (68 per cent) than among young men (82 per cent). Among older cohorts, the literacy rates are lower and show more pronounced gaps between women and men.

TVET programmes can be effective means for meeting labour demands. They teach the technical skills, rather than academic knowledge, that are required across diverse fields. This characteristic, combined with more flexible curricula and shorter time to certification, facilitates access to the labour market. Nigeria has a structured formal TVET

system, with links to academic education from the lower secondary to the graduate level. It provides youth with opportunities to obtain recognized technical certifications and to follow paths that lead to academic studies. However, the importance of the TVET system is limited as fewer than 200,000 people graduate from it each year.

The TVET system faces a number of challenges, including institutional complexity due to a decentralized governance model, limitations in terms of infrastructure and training materials, as well as a focus on theory as opposed to practice. According to the ERGP, limited access, capacity and infrastructure “mean that the work force lacks the critical skills needed to develop the economy”. The NEP refers to skills mismatch as a barrier to job creation. Both skills development and anticipation will be critical in this regard.

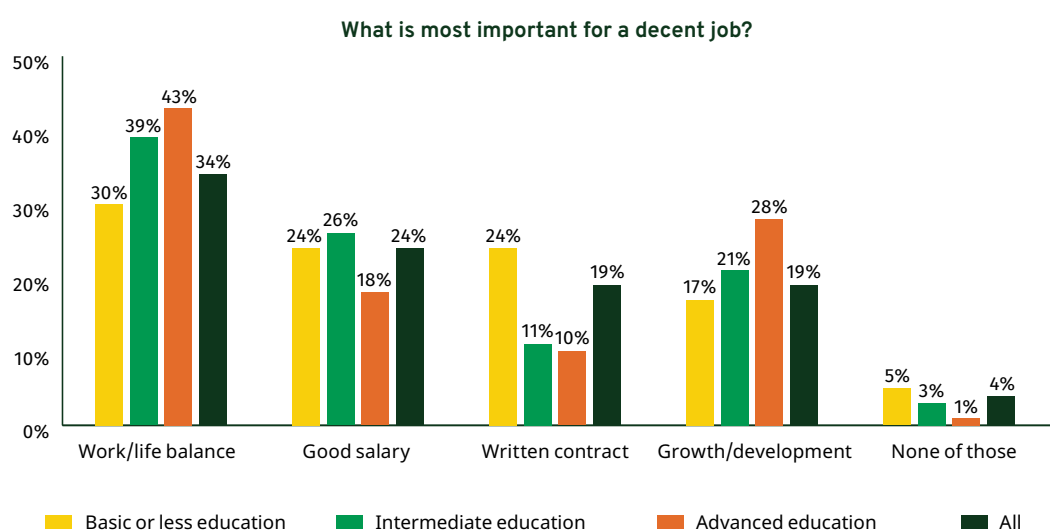
The non-formal TVET system targets adults, adolescents and school leavers in the acquisition of lower-level technical skills in agriculture, manufacturing, and arts and crafts. Traditional apprenticeships in the informal economy remain the primary providers of skills for underprivileged people. In this context, the Nigerian Skills Qualifications Framework provides for the recognition of both non-formal and informal learning.

Sources: UNESCO, *TVET Country Profile: Nigeria* (2019); World Bank, *Investing in Human Capital for Nigeria's Future* (2018); World Bank, *Nigeria: Skills for Competitiveness and Employability* (2015); UNESCO, “Data for the Sustainable Development Goals: Nigeria”; ILO, *State of Skills: Nigeria*; ERGP; NEP.



Young people also reflected on what, in their opinion, is most important for a job to be a decent job. The answers provided by youth from across Nigeria range over several categories, reflecting the importance of needing different elements to come together for a job to be regarded as decent. Across education levels, work-life balance was seen as the key component of a decent job (figure 3). For young people with a lower level of formal education, around one third identified work-life balance and a quarter both a good salary and a written contract (with rights and obligations) as most important for a decent job. For young people that have completed an advanced degree (higher level of education), work-life balance and opportunities for professional growth appear to matter the most.

Figure 3. Factors identified by young people (15-29 years old) surveyed as most important for a decent job, by level of education (percentage)



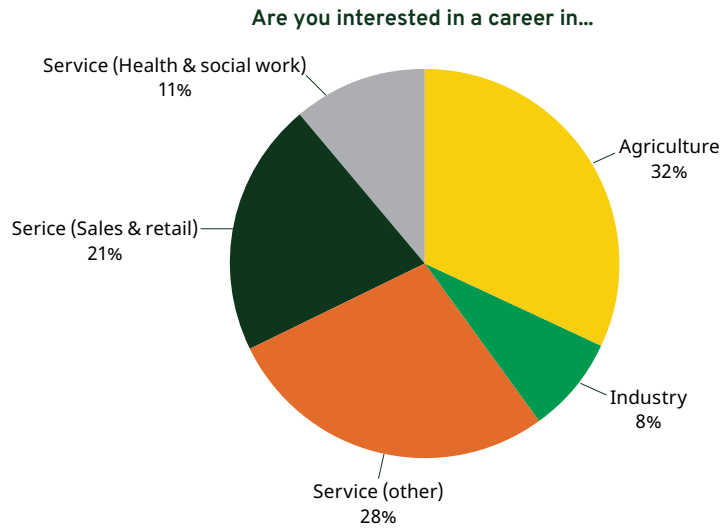
Note: Youth (aged 15 to 29) across all 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory were surveyed online and offline from May to June 2020. Data was collected through an online questionnaire, face-to-face interviews carried out by youth volunteers, and relying on U-Report (an SMS-based platform), in collaboration with UNICEF. A total of 106,014 young people provided complete information on all questions.

Source: Nationwide survey of young people (15-29 years old) conducted by Nigeria Youth SDGs Network in collaboration with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the ILO and the FMYS.

Young people also indicated which type of job they would prefer. A government or public sector job was the preferred option for more than two out of five young people, with almost half of young women (48 per cent) indicating this preference. Just over a third (35 per cent) of young women and men would prefer to own a business or farm.

Finally, the services sector appears to be preferred option for employment among young people. The majority of respondents (60 per cent) stated they were interested in a career in this sector, followed by agriculture (32 per cent) and industry (8 per cent) (figure 4).

Figure 4. Sector of employment preferred by young people (aged 15-29) surveyed (percentage)



Source: Nationwide survey of young people (15-29 years old) conducted by Nigeria Youth SDGs Network in collaboration with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the ILO and the FMYSO.

1.4. Policy and institutional framework

Employment creation, including for young people, remains a key goal and priority of the Nigerian Government, as reflected in the macroeconomic and sectoral policies and frameworks that have been put in place. Key policies include the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), the National Employment Policy (NEP), the National Youth Policy (NYP), the National Policy on Education, the National Policy on Labour Migration and the National Social Protection Policy.

The ERGP aims to create jobs by developing labour-intensive sectors (such as agriculture, manufacturing, housing and construction), continuing and extending existing public works programmes and encouraging private sector participation in the economy. It is also meant to foster infrastructure development in sectors with the capacity to create demand for labour, particularly local labour. It seeks to sustain the N-Power programme (see below) and support small and medium-sized enterprises in maximizing their potential for employment creation. In addition, the Government's social housing programme is expected to create jobs for artisans and craftworkers.

The NEP aims to create an enabling environment for productive and employment-intensive growth in Nigeria and outlines strategies for the creation of decent work, including through reinvigorating the private sector, transforming agriculture, providing and maintaining physical infrastructure, and improving access to markets and credit facilities for businesses. It identifies programmes and initiatives to create decent jobs in key sectors of the economy and incentivizes the private sector to invest in skills development, employment and production. It recommends ways to enhance the employability of workers, productivity of enterprises and inclusiveness of growth. With regard to youth employment, the NEP focuses on government interventions for employment generation, particularly in the agricultural sector, and demand-driven skills acquisition. Recommendations relate to existing government programmes, individual institutions and specific thematic areas. The elaboration of national workforce and skills development policies is being proposed. The NEP also focuses on education, skills development, TVET, access to credit, small businesses, cooperatives, green jobs, infrastructure development and labour market information. A National Employment Council for the implementation of the NEP has been constituted and includes a wide variety of stakeholders, including the FMYSO.

The NYP (2019–23) aims to “provide an appropriate framework that protects the fundamental human rights of all youth, promote their optimal development and well-being, and enhance their participation in every sphere of national development processes”. It focuses on the following strategic thrusts: (1) Productive workforce and sustainable economic engagement of youth; (2) Health and health-promoting lifestyle; (3) Participation, inclusiveness and equitable opportunities for all youth; (4) Promotive and protective environment for youth development; and (5) Partnership-building and effective collaboration. The implementation of the NYP is coordinated by the FMYSO.

The National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (2020–30) aims to promote growth through digital technologies by focusing on eight pillars: (1) Developmental regulation; (2) Digital literacy and skills; (3) Solid infrastructure; (4) Service infrastructure; (5) Digital services development and promotion; (6) Soft infrastructure; (7) Digital society and emerging technologies; and (8) Indigenous content development and adoption. Each of the pillars outlines a list of implementation strategies, with specific actions to be taken by the Government.

The National Policy on Labour Migration includes a chapter on skills development aimed at improving employability both in Nigeria and abroad.

The National Social Protection Policy aims to provide a framework for promoting social justice, equity and inclusive growth. It has 16 policy measures of which four (policy measures 8 to 11) refer to matters of livelihood enhancement and employment. Policy measures 9 and 10 are directly targeted towards youth (among others) and read: “Labour based cash transfer/Public Work Programmes for Youths, persons with disabilities and the unemployed”; and “Provide support for sustainable livelihood through skills training, access to land, input for smallholder farmers, affirmative action for youth and women’s employment, and access to financial services for micro and small enterprises and cooperatives”.

The Office of the Vice President had developed a Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan for Job Creation and Youth Employment in Nigeria (Strategic Framework) for the period 2016 to 2018, which focused on priority sectors, geographical clusters, skill development and talent supply, and policy and infrastructure.

The N-Power programme under the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development aims to support skills development among young Nigerians, create job opportunities and strengthen the provision of public services. It includes both classroom and workplace training, covers financial support to trainees and incentives for employers, and supports access to labour market information. The programme addresses Nigerians between the ages of 18 and 35 and some 500,000 beneficiaries are being employed as teaching assistants, agricultural extension workers and public health workers. It includes graduate and non-graduate programmes.

The National Directorate of Employment aims to design and implement job creation programmes through rural employment promotion, special public works, small-scale enterprise development and vocational skills development. Other institutions dealing with the issue of youth employment include the Federal Ministry of Education, the National Youth Service Corps and the National Social Investment Office.

Development initiatives and interventions by development partners to promote youth employment issues are being coordinated through the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (UNSDPF) for the period 2018 to 2022. The UNSDPF is underpinned by the principles of human rights, inclusive development, gender equality and women’s empowerment, sustainable development and resilience, leaving no one behind and accountability. The UNSDPF has three strategic priorities: (1) Governance, human rights, peace and security; (2) Equitable quality basic services; and (3) Sustainable and inclusive economic growth and development.

The Decent Work Country Programme II contains a range of strategic interventions aimed at supporting national initiatives for reducing decent work deficits and strengthening national capacities for effective programme delivery. The strategic priorities of the Programme are promoting employment, extending the scope of social protection and strengthening social dialogue and tripartism. Employment promotion focuses on interventions influencing policies and programmes that will enhance incomes and livelihoods through the creation of decent jobs, especially for young

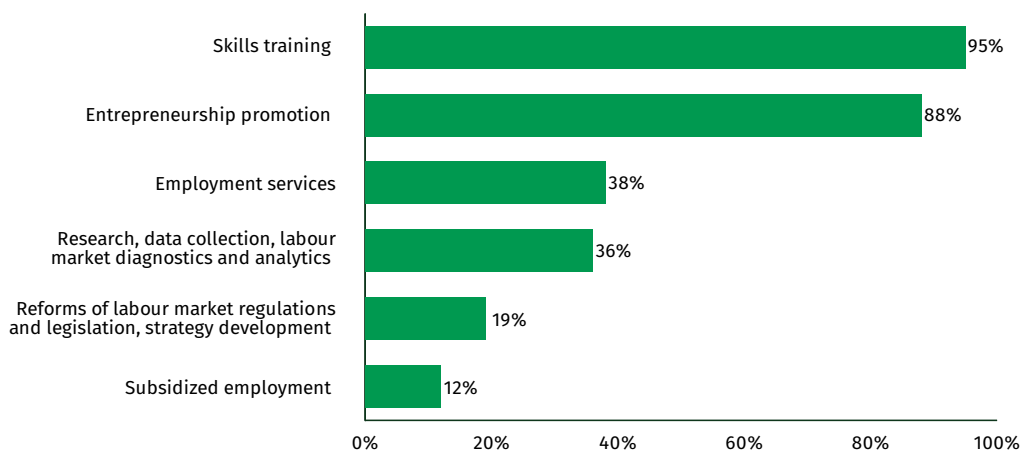
women and men. This should be achieved through, among other things, employment promotion, data generation and analysis and intensive infrastructure investment, with particular attention on increasing the employment content of public investment in infrastructure.

The Nigerian Youth Employment Action Plan (NIYEAP) aims to leverage existing policies and development strategies to accelerate the impact on youth employment and create synergies among different stakeholders and their respective interventions. As a cross-cutting development challenge, tackling youth employment requires a coordinated and joined-up approach. Building on previous and ongoing work, the NIYEAP proposes a number of strategic lines of action to promote decent jobs for youth while furthering the implementation of existing policy commitments. Relevant stakeholders will review progress made and determine key priorities, responsibilities, resource requirements and time frames on a regular basis to ensure alignment with national development priorities and emerging issues. The NIYEAP aims to advance implementation of youth-employment-related commitments of sectorial policies and broader development frameworks.

1.5. The youth employment programme landscape in Nigeria

In 2020, the ILO developed a Youth Employment Inventory (YEI), which is a comprehensive mapping of key youth employment interventions that are currently being implemented in Nigeria. The YEI was developed through extensive desk research and structured interviews and captures detailed information on youth employment programmes such as their main areas of intervention, geographical scope, youth engagement practices of programmes across different stages of the project cycle, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and related mitigation efforts, as well as their needs for results measurement and implementation support. According to the Inventory, almost all major youth employment programmes in Nigeria combine several different services and involve some form of skills training and entrepreneurship promotion (see figure 5). It also shows that other types of interventions, such as employment services or subsidized employment, are less frequently implemented. Existing interventions in Nigeria will complement and advance the NIYEAP across its four strategic lines of action (see Part II).

Figure 5. Main categories of interventions included in the Youth Employment Inventory



Note: Interventions may be categorized multiple times.

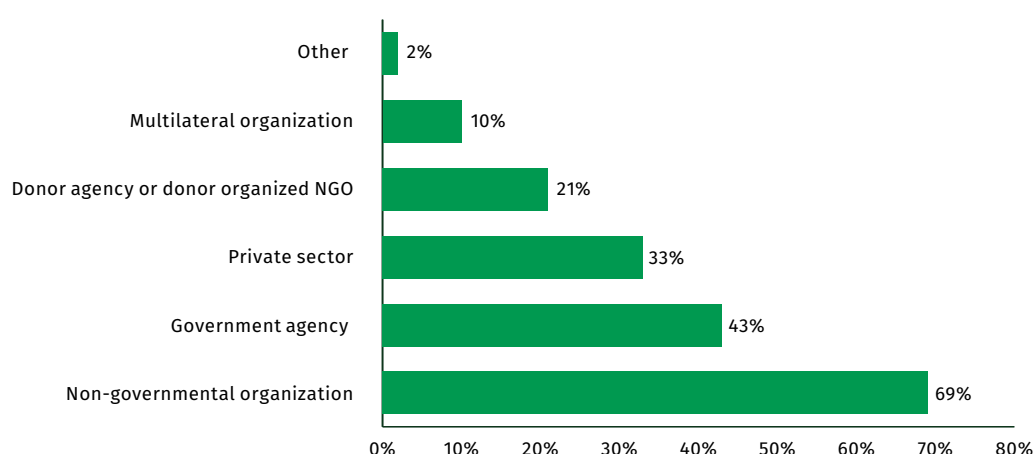
Source: Data comes from the Youth Employment Inventory conducted by the ILO that captures information on 42 youth employment programmes in Nigeria as of December 2020.

Young women and low-income individuals appear to be the main target groups for the majority of youth employment programmes. Youth with disabilities are less frequently targeted (39 per cent) in these interventions. There is a lack of interventions targeting specific groups of young people, youth with low levels of education and those who dropped out of education. Concerted efforts

should be made to promote the labour market inclusion of the most vulnerable groups through targeted labour market measures, as recognized by one of the strategic lines of action (Equality and rights) for the implementation of the NIYEAP (see Part II).

Most of the 42 interventions analysed are implemented either by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or the Government (see figure 6). NGOs are involved in more than two thirds of the interventions (69 per cent), followed by the Government (43 per cent). A little less than half of the interventions are implemented collaboratively, with different types of agencies cooperating as implementers. While the private sector is involved in implementing youth employment programmes, it is rare for private sector companies to work jointly with the Government in such interventions. Promoting private sector engagement will be crucial for the implementation of the NIYEAP.

Figure 6. Implementation of interventions by type of organization (percentage)

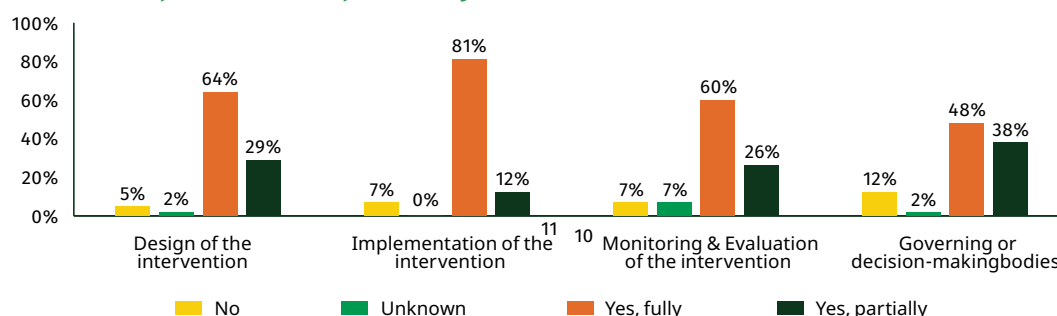


Note: Interventions may be categorized multiple times.

Source: Data comes from the Youth Employment Inventory conducted by the ILO that captures information on 42 youth employment programmes in Nigeria as of December 2020.

Youth engagement is a priority across the board, with almost all key youth employment programmes engaging or consulting with young people either fully or partially in the design and implementation of interventions (see figure 7). Young people are less frequently engaged or consulted in the monitoring and evaluation of interventions, highlighting the need to improve youth engagement in this phase of the project cycle. There is also scope for improving youth engagement in governing and decision-making bodies.

Figure 7. Youth engagement by interventions across different phases of project implementation (percentage)



Source: Data comes from the Youth Employment Inventory conducted by the ILO that captures information on 42 youth employment programmes in Nigeria as of December 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges to the implementation of interventions. While around one in five programmes reported that implementation came to a complete stop at some point, the majority of interventions were able to continue implementation, albeit at a reduced pace. Only a few interventions have been able to bring implementation fully back on track.

Since the start of the pandemic, youth employment programmes have had to alter their implementation modalities and faced serious constraints in adapting their interventions. Before the pandemic, the majority of interventions were delivered through a mix of face-to-face and online/distance learning. The next most frequently used mode of delivery was remote delivery, followed by fully face-to-face learning. Although the mix of face-to-face and online/distance learning has been used less often since the start of the pandemic, it remains the most popular means of service delivery, followed by fully remote delivery. Hybrid and fully remote service delivery modalities risk the social exclusion of vulnerable young people and the exacerbation of already existing digital divides, highlighting the need to address challenges around digital infrastructure, connectivity and skills throughout the implementation of the NIYEAP.

More than half of the programmes faced serious constraints in adapting the delivery of interventions in response to the changed circumstances brought about by the pandemic. This was due to limited access to the internet and lack of digital skills among beneficiaries. Limited access to suitable online tools and platforms and difficulties adapting intervention models to online/distance delivery methods were the two other commonly cited constraints. The digital skills deficit among youth and the job creation potential of the digital economy warrant investments in digital skills development, and the promotion of entrepreneurship and decent jobs for youth in the digital economy, as identified within the NIYEAP's four strategic lines of action (see Part II).

The Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development leads the implementation of the Nigerian Youth Investment Fund (NYIF) for the period 2020-2023. The NYIF aims to support innovative ideas, skills, talent and enterprises of Nigerian youth by providing access to credit and soft loans leading to the generation of 500,000 employment opportunities. The Digital Skills Acquisition, Entrepreneurship, Employability and Leadership (DEEL) Initiative promotes digital literacy and skills development, entrepreneurship and leadership training as well as practical work experience.



PART

2

**STRATEGIC LINES
OF ACTION**

Part 2. Strategic lines of action

The overarching goal of the Nigerian Youth Employment Action Plan is to contribute to the achievement of decent, productive and freely chosen employment for young people by complementing and reinforcing existing policy commitments and national development priorities and related efforts.

The NIYEAP has four priority areas of intervention: Employability, Entrepreneurship, Employment, and Equality and rights. It builds on existing frameworks, such as the National Youth Policy and the ERGP, is informed by the ILO Call for Action on Youth Employment and aligns with the thematic priorities of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, which are: digital skills, quality apprenticeships, youth in the rural economy, green jobs for youth, youth entrepreneurship and self-employment, youth transitioning to the formal economy, and youth in fragile situations. Strategic lines of action under the priority areas of intervention are focused on key sectors that have the potential to create jobs for youth.

2.1. Employability

Education, vocational training, skills development and work experience are essential to enhance the employability of young people. Employability results from several factors – a foundation of core skills, access to education, availability of training opportunities, motivation, ability and support to take advantage of opportunities for continuous learning, and recognition of acquired skills – and is critical for enabling workers to attain decent work and manage change and for enabling enterprises to adopt new technologies and enter new markets. There is a need to promote skills development in economic sectors with high job creation potential for young people, and to expand educational opportunities at all levels and ensure that graduates are equipped with skills and competencies sought after by the labour market.

Strategic lines of action³⁹

- Expand educational opportunities at all levels (from present baselines) by at least 50 per cent for Nigerian youths by 2024.
- Within the medium to long-term, achieve 80 per cent enrolment at the primary; 60 per cent at the secondary; and 15 per cent at the tertiary level.
- Provide remedial programmes in key areas of deficit to assist at least 50 per cent of unemployed graduates.
- Mount advocacy on need for increased funding for education.
- Facilitate an enabling environment for increased enrolment in STEM courses through the provision of bursaries, and encourage female participation.
- Establish scholarship and study loan schemes to expand educational opportunities in tertiary institutions.
- Assess the potential for decent job creation for young people in select economic sectors, including through mapping existing skills gaps/needs, and assess TVET systems and curricula with a view to aligning them more closely with labour market requirements.
- Advocate for comprehensive educational reforms, including through the introduction of entrepreneurship, innovation, ethics, and life and digital skills in school and training curricula.

³⁹ Measures proposed by the NEP under “Employment for Nigerian Youth” are included in chapter 4.7.1 of the NEP (from p. 35).

- Develop and launch an innovative digital skills curriculum, comprising computer science, information technology and digital literacy, and promote digital skills development.
- Build the capacity of at least 80 per cent of unemployed youth in basic, mid-level and advanced digital skills.
- Promote short- and long-term skills development in at least five sectors with potential for job creation, i.e. manufacturing, rural economy, renewable energy, creative industry, construction, services and digital economy, for 75 per cent of unemployed youth.
- Upgrade informal work-based learning systems and promote the recognition of prior learning.
- Improve mechanisms for skills anticipation and forecasting.
- Promote quality internships and apprenticeships, and integrate work-based learning and core work/soft skills into existing training programmes.
- Harmonize training/TVET curricula, advocate for adequate resources and improve the perception of TVET among young people and employers.
- Promote skills development for vulnerable groups, including potential and returning migrants, young people with disabilities and young people in fragile settings.
- Strengthen links and coordination between education providers, the Government, employers' and workers' organizations and the private sector in the design, development and delivery of training programmes, the involvement of enterprises in apprenticeship programmes and the establishment of public-private partnerships for skills development.

2.2. Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship development can help empower youths and facilitate their entry into business, and the gradual transformation of the informal economy to formal sector activities to create more and better jobs for young men and women. Meaningful jobs cannot be created for youths without viable enterprises. An institutionalized and integrated approach to entrepreneurship development is a necessity.

Strategic lines of action

- Support at least 50,000 entrepreneurs in five sectors, including agro-business and the digital economy, annually.
- Develop long-duration entrepreneurship courses/modules in at least five operational areas including case studies.
- Promote the organization of short-term entrepreneurship courses to 50 per cent of various enterprise groups annually.
- Link all participants in short-term entrepreneurship courses with financing organizations like microfinance institutions and government facilities.
- Supply participants in short-term courses with vital information resources including on export markets, outsourcing outlets, etc.
- Conduct tracer studies of people who have undergone all gradations of entrepreneurship courses.
- Promote an enabling environment for the establishment and development of youth-led enterprises.
- Strengthen the institutional framework and promote an enabling environment for young entrepreneurs.

- Raise awareness of entrepreneurship, self-employment and cooperatives as career options through advertisements on mainstream and social media, and through conferences and seminars.
- Promote access to business development and management skills and services.
- Support access to finance through awareness raising, the provision of training, the adaptation of financial products and services to the needs of youth, and the provision of innovative financing, such as crowd funding, peer-to-peer mechanisms and impact investing.
- Support and incentivize the transition of informal micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to formality.
- Identify entrepreneurship opportunities in the digital economy and support at least 2 new or existing technology, innovation and incubation hubs for young entrepreneurs in 36 states and the FCT.
- Enhance opportunities for youth entrepreneurship in the rural economy, including through production and service centres and support initiatives to promote access to land, markets, market linkages and value chain integration.
- Promote an enabling environment for the emergence of at least 5 new large scale agro-based private commercial enterprises in all the 36 states and FCT, and provide incentives for the employment of youth.
- Provide at least 3 large-scale farming settlements with facilities and amenities to promote youth agriculture ventures in 36 states and FCT.
- Provide an enabling environment for the emergence of private sector youth-driven initiatives in the transportation sector, public works including beautification and upkeep of the environment, mining, renewable energy and afforestation.
- Identify opportunities for youth entrepreneurship, including through the promotion of local content and public procurement targeted at youth-led businesses.
- Strengthen existing initiatives to provide access to credit for youth, including the 75 billion Nigerian Youth Investment Fund.
- Facilitate the emergence of a sustainable Youth Entrepreneurship Network to provide an institutional setting for support, monitoring and evaluation of youth entrepreneurs.

2.3. Employment

The availability of adequate employment services can help young people transition from school to work. To help youths enter the labour market, relevant institutional frameworks and capacity need to be in place. Young people should have access to information, knowledge and services that can help them navigate the labour market, identify skill needs and take advantage of education, training and employment opportunities. ICT can play a role in addressing information failures related to job searching, skills matching or productivity. Job-friendly policies and demand-side measures can help young people to gain valuable work experience, incentivize investments and promote structural transformation.

Strategic lines of action

- Develop mentorship programmes to support upcoming entrepreneurs in sectors with potential for job creation, including the digital economy.
- Expand opportunities for youth participation in the digital economy through outsourcing services.

- Strengthen online and offline career information, counselling and guidance services, promote the availability of accurate and up-to-date information on jobseekers and vacancies and increase the capacity of existing information systems and resource/service centres.
- Support efforts aimed at job matching, including job fairs.
- Promote the collection and analysis of age- and gender-disaggregated labour market information and enhance the evidence base on vulnerable groups, such as migrants and young people in fragile settings.
- Promote public employment programmes and employment-intensive investments, including in infrastructure, with a focus on young workers and entrepreneurs.
- Increase youth employment in the security services including a carefully and integrated employment expansion scheme for youth employment in all security services, within a pre-determined security job creation fund subject to budget constraints.
- Promote employment generation schemes for youth in fragile settings and explore innovative ways to promote employment, including through mobile training facilities or digital resources.
- Promote incentives for enterprises to hire new graduates.
- Promote and further develop youth participation at every level of value chains with high growth and/or job-creation potential, with an emphasis on the comparative advantage of each geopolitical zone.
- Raise awareness of agriculture as a career option and promote access to infrastructure, technology, inputs and finance.
- Promote private sector engagement and investment in the tourism sector.
- Create awareness and capacitate youth on trade agreements that hold the potential for job creation such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).
- Enhance job creation through the facilitation and implementation of legal migration and mobility programmes with emphasis on youth employment.
- Develop a Jobs for Peace Programme aimed at engaging vulnerable youth including former combatants in decent and productive employment opportunities in collaboration with the ILO⁴⁰.

2.4. Equality and rights

All policies, programmes and initiatives aimed at the promotion of youth employment should ensure equal opportunities for young men and women, with a special emphasis on vulnerable groups. International labour standards can help to ensure that young people receive equal treatment. Every effort should be made to promote the labour market inclusion of disadvantaged youth through targeted labour market measures. Formal social protection schemes, such as pensions, health insurance and employment injury insurance, should be accessible to young workers. Voluntary insurance schemes can benefit young people disproportionately, given their high rate of participation in the informal economy and self-employment.

Strategic lines of action

- Collect data and information on the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people, with a focus on labour market outcomes, informality and rights at work.

⁴⁰ The ILO has implemented similar programmes on sustaining peace and social cohesion in other countries.

- Raise awareness on fundamental principles and rights at work and ensure their extension to young workers, including in the informal economy.
- Promote equal opportunities in youth employment and ensure non-discrimination and equality of treatment for all workers.
- Promote awareness on occupational safety and health and ensure compliance with existing laws and standards.
- Support vulnerable and marginalized groups, including through the provision of training, access to services and information and by raising awareness on rights and safety at work.
- Extend social security to young workers, including in the informal economy.⁴¹
- Implement the National Employment Policy especially with regard to gender and youth mainstreaming in development projects.
- Implement the National Youth Policy especially as it affects equal treatment between young men and women.
- Implement the National Gender Policy especially relating to labour and employment and gender budgeting.
- Implement the Bill on Persons with Disabilities.



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⁴¹ As per NEP, Chapter 4.11.4, p. 51.

PART

3

**IMPLEMENTATION
ARRANGEMENTS**

Part 3. Implementation arrangements

3.1. Financing

In view of the multidimensional and multisectoral nature of interventions aimed at addressing youth unemployment and underemployment, different financing and resource mobilization strategies will be sought. In line with national financing modalities, the implementation of the NIYEAP should be supported through Government appropriations, which will require pro-employment budgeting at national and subnational levels. The effective delivery of the priority actions outlined in the NIYEAP, however, will go beyond Government funding. Other sources of funding and support for the operationalization of the NIYEAP will include the private sector, bilateral and multilateral institutions and development assistance.

The FMYSD will develop and coordinate the overall budget for the implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation of the NIYEAP in consultation/coordination with relevant stakeholders.

Specific programmes, projects and initiatives aimed at promoting youth employment and productivity in line with the NIYEAP will be financed by the respective ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs)⁴² with support from relevant public and private sector institutions. While line MDAs will design and implement their programmes and projects using budgetary allocations, the FMYSD will have its own budget to ensure proper coordination, monitoring, implementation and evaluation of initiatives across all sectors. In addition, the FMYSD will budget for its own programmes and projects on youth employment as other MDAs. The entire arrangement will constitute the stakeholders' budgetary commitment.

Private sector financing is diverse. It ranges from special intervention funds by leading industrialists for the development of specific skills and entrepreneurial capabilities, to corporate social responsibility interventions by companies (especially in the oil and gas and telecommunications sectors). It also includes private sector funding tied to government directives/incentives to promote youth employment, such as the implementation of local content policies.

A number of development partners are committed to supporting the Government in mitigating the challenges of unemployment and underemployment in Nigeria. The UN system attends to the issue of youth employment through a number of interventions encapsulated in the UNSDPF. Thus, the UNSDPF should be a good basis for mobilizing resources (and aligning efforts) for youth employment in Nigeria in line with the Youth 2030 Strategy. To tap into financing opportunities offered by development partners, the Government (through the FMYSD) should organize resource mobilization forums. These forums could serve as platforms from which to present government initiatives on youth employment to the development community for possible funding. While UN agencies can provide technical expertise and financial resources for specific programmes, development partners can make additional funding available. The Government will engage and negotiate with these organizations on a consistent basis.

The Government can benefit from funding support for youth employment from bilateral and multilateral institutions, such as the United States Agency for International Development, the Korea International Cooperation Agency, the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), the European Union and foreign embassies in Nigeria, which can also provide support for initiatives at subnational levels. The Government, at both federal and state levels, will explore these avenues to strengthen youth employment financing in Nigeria.

⁴² These will comprise key economic ministries and their agencies, including the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, the Federal Ministry of Mines and Steel Development and others.

3.2. Coordination

The NIYEAP covers the period from 2021 to 2024. As a multi-stakeholder and sectoral plan, the implementation of the NIYEAP should be advanced in a coordinated manner by all relevant partners, including the Government, the private sector, workers' and employers' organizations, youth and youth-led organizations and civil society.

The FMYSD and its technical departments and agencies will play a coordinating role to overcome challenges and ensure that results are achieved. To this end, the FMYSD will develop regular progress reports and liaise closely with other relevant ministries and national institutions, social partners, civil society, the private sector and organizations representing the interests of young people.

To translate the Government's political commitment to decent and productive work for young people into practical actions, a National Youth Employment Action Committee⁴³ has been established under the leadership of the FMYSD. The Action Committee's membership comprises relevant ministries and other institutions, such as the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, Federal Ministry of Education, the Federal Ministry of Power, Works and Housing, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Bank of Industry and the National Bureau of Statistics. Similar Action Committees should be set up at the state level to align related efforts and ensure effective monitoring and evaluation.

To ensure the participation of all relevant stakeholders, workers' and employers' organizations, civil society representatives and youth organizations will be invited to participate in meetings of the Action Committee. Donors could be invited to ensure there is a coordinated approach in the design, implementation and funding of development cooperation projects that focus on youth employment.

The involvement of young people can help in the identification of key challenges. It will also enhance ownership of the NIYEAP and ensure that it remains responsive to emerging issues and priorities. Through their engagement, the capacity of youth and youth representative organizations to engage in policy dialogues and contribute to the implementation of the NIYEAP could be strengthened.

Close coordination should be sought with the recently established National Employment Council, which supports efforts aimed at promoting full employment, including the implementation of the NEP.⁴⁴ The FMYSD is a member of the Council.

The Action Committee should meet at least three times per year to review progress in the implementation of the NIYEAP, propose priority areas for action and come up with recommendations on how to sustain and further build on results achieved.

In the operationalization of the NIYEAP, it will be necessary to support the capacity of Action Committee members and other involved stakeholders to ensure efficient implementation, monitoring and review. Young people should be actively involved, including in the design and implementation of initiatives intended to address their concerns, expectations and needs. The implementation of the NIYEAP is an opportunity for increasing ownership, inclusion, responsibility, leadership and belonging among young people.

3.3. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring, review and evaluation of the NIYEAP will be coordinated by the National Youth Employment Action Committee in collaboration with similar committees at the state level and under the leadership of the FMYSD.

⁴³ Also known as the National Inter-ministerial Steering Committee on Job Creation for Youth.

⁴⁴ NEP, p. 55.

An annual stocktaking exercise will be undertaken to review progress in the implementation of the NIYEAP, identify possible challenges and agree on priority actions for the next year. The annual meeting of the Action Committee will serve as the platform for the review, to which relevant stakeholders will be invited. Similar meetings should be held at the state level and feed into the annual stocktaking exercise via designated officials of the FMYSO.

The monitoring of the NIYEAP will be informed by an annual survey of results achieved in the priority areas identified in the implementation plan. The survey will be shared with relevant stakeholders ahead of the meeting of the Action Committee.

Based on the survey and the Action Committee meeting, a brief progress report will be developed, highlighting results achieved and emerging issues. This report could be the basis for an annual brief on youth employment in Nigeria.

The annual progress reports will also inform a final evaluation of the NIYEAP implementation, to be conducted in 2023. This evaluation should review results achieved, highlight challenges faced and make recommendations for a possible revision of the NIYEAP. The evaluation report should include information about resources spent on the implementation of the Plan and related activities, the effectiveness and efficiency of interventions and the extent to which results were achieved.

Specifically, the final evaluation could look at the following factors:

- **Relevance:** the extent to which the priority actions identified by the NIYEAP are justified and whether they were/are relevant and correspond to local and national development priorities.
- **Effectiveness:** the extent to which the objectives were achieved, whether the interventions and means used had the expected impact and whether more could have been obtained by using different means.
- **Efficiency:** whether the objectives were achieved at the lowest possible cost and whether better results could have been obtained at the same cost.
- **Utility:** whether the expected or unexpected results are satisfactory from the point of view of direct and indirect beneficiaries.
- **Sustainability:** the extent to which the results and impact, including institutional changes, are durable over time and whether these will also continue in the absence of further financing.

The evaluation should use a combination of methods to measure overall impact, such as surveys of stakeholders and beneficiaries and analysis of cost-effectiveness. Evaluation details could be gathered through the use of primary data (collected from individuals directly involved in the implementation of related interventions), secondary data and qualitative techniques (surveys of focus group and control group). In the latter, the control group would comprise a random selection of eligible people who had been excluded from participation.

Both annual progress reports and the final evaluation will be communicated to relevant stakeholders.

The effectiveness of development cooperation could be maximized through the following:

- The effectiveness of joint actions should be enhanced. The Government of Nigeria and development partners should strengthen their cooperation framework, which currently is encapsulated mainly in the UNSDPF for the UN system, but also in various other programmes and projects of donor organizations. Results frameworks should be clear with SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) indicators and targets and unambiguous funding mechanisms.
- A joint Government/donors/development partners monitoring and evaluation team on youth employment could be established to monitor/track progress, propose corrective measures and evaluate impacts.
- A results-oriented reporting and evaluation framework should be established, based on existing youth-employment-related policies, action plans and development frameworks.

- Donors/development partners should be invited to meetings of the National Youth Employment Action Committee, to review progress in addressing the youth employment challenge and identify priority areas for action.
- Policy implementation should be adequately budgeted for and innovative ways to support youth employment programmes should be sought.
- The Government, development partners and donors should seek to align and harmonize policies, development priorities and frameworks, programmes and projects on youth employment .
- Donors and development partners should support the capacity of ministries, departments and agencies to formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate interventions in youth employment.
- Young people should be put at the centre of programmes and projects being implemented within existing frameworks and of development initiatives to be developed across the various sectors of the Nigerian economy.

3.4. Communication

A communication strategy will be developed to raise awareness among key stakeholders, including young people, of the NIYEAP and its priorities. The strategy should also support multistakeholder cooperation, resource mobilization efforts and effective implementation.

Possible actions include radio and social media campaigns, the creation of a dedicated website, the identification of youth employment champions, the organization of panel/roundtable discussions and outreach activities at relevant events.

Gender-responsive and youth-driven communication approaches should be promoted to ensure that young people remain informed of activities and initiatives aimed at promoting youth employment.

3.5. Implementation road map

The NIYEAP can only be successful if it is implemented in a structured and coordinated manner by the various stakeholders involved in the promotion and creation of youth employment. Annex 1 lists identified priority actions in the four thematic areas – employability, entrepreneurship, employment, and equality and rights – as well as key stakeholders in each area. Details on responsibilities, resource requirements and costing will be further mapped out. The resulting implementation road map will be updated on an annual basis to reflect progress made and emerging issues and priorities.



ANNEX

Annex 1. Strategic lines of action for the period 2021 to 2024

Employability

Strategic lines of action 2021-24	Key stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand educational opportunities at all levels (from present baselines) by at least 50 per cent for Nigerian youths by 2024. 	Federal Ministry of Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within the medium to long-term, achieve 80 per cent enrolment at the primary; 60 per cent at the secondary; and 15 per cent at the tertiary level. 	Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide remedial programmes in key areas of deficit to assist at least 50 per cent of unemployed graduates. 	Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mount advocacy on need for increased funding for education. 	Federal Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate an enabling environment for increased enrolment in STEM courses through the provision of bursaries, and encourage female participation. 	National Board for Technical Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish scholarship and study loan schemes to expand educational opportunities in tertiary institutions. 	State Ministries of Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the potential for decent job creation for young people in select economic sectors, including through mapping existing skills gaps/needs, and assess TVET systems and curricula with a view to aligning them more closely with labour market requirements. 	Nigerian Education Research and Development Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for comprehensive educational reforms, including through the introduction of entrepreneurship, innovation, ethics, and life and digital skills in school and training curricula. 	Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and launch an innovative digital skills curriculum, comprising computer science, information technology and digital literacy, and promote digital skills development. 	Nigeria Labour Congress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build the capacity of at least 80 per cent of unemployed youth in basic, mid-level and advanced digital skills. 	Trade Union Congress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote short- and long-term skills development in at least five sectors with potential for job creation, i.e. manufacturing, rural economy, renewable energy, creative industry, construction, services and digital economy, for 75 per cent of unemployed youth. 	The Manufacturers Association of Nigeria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade informal work-based learning systems and promote the recognition of prior learning. 	The Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve mechanisms for skills anticipation and forecasting. 	Federal Inland Revenue Service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote quality internships and apprenticeships, and integrate work-based learning and core work/soft skills into existing training programmes. 	Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harmonize training/TVET curricula, advocate for adequate resources and improve the perception of TVET among young people and employers. 	National Planning Commission
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote skills development for vulnerable groups, including potential and returning migrants, young people with disabilities and young people in fragile settings. 	ILO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen links and coordination between education providers, the Government, employers' and workers' organizations and the private sector in the design, development and delivery of training programmes, the involvement of enterprises in apprenticeship programmes and the establishment of public-private partnerships for skills development. 	UNESCO

Entrepreneurship

Strategic lines of action 2021-24

- Support at least 50,000 entrepreneurs in five sectors, including agro-business and the digital economy, annually.
- Develop long-duration entrepreneurship courses/modules in at least five operational areas including case studies.
- Promote the organization of short-term entrepreneurship courses to 50 per cent of various enterprise groups annually.
- Link all participants in short-term entrepreneurship courses with financing organizations like microfinance institutions and government facilities.
- Supply participants in short-term courses with vital information resources including on export markets, outsourcing outlets, etc.
- Conduct tracer studies of people who have undergone all gradations of entrepreneurship courses.
- Promote an enabling environment for the establishment and development of youth-led enterprises.
- Strengthen the institutional framework and promote an enabling environment for young entrepreneurs.
- Raise awareness of entrepreneurship, self-employment and cooperatives as career options.
- Promote access to business development and management skills and services.
- Support access to finance through awareness raising, the provision of training, the adaptation of financial products and services to the needs of youth, and the provision of innovative financing, such as crowd funding, peer-to-peer mechanisms and impact investing.
- Support and incentivize the transition of informal micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to formality.
- Identify entrepreneurship opportunities in the digital economy and support technology, innovation and incubation hubs for young entrepreneurs.
- Enhance opportunities for youth entrepreneurship in the rural economy, including through production and service centres and support initiatives to promote access to markets, market linkages and value chain integration.
- Promote an enabling environment for the emergence of at least 5 new large scale agro-based private commercial enterprises in all the 36 states and FCT, and provide incentives for the employment of youth.
- Provide at least 3 large-scale farming settlements with facilities and amnesties to promote youth agriculture ventures in 36 states and FCT.
- Provide an enabling environment for the emergence of private sector youth-driven initiatives in the transportation sector, public works including beautification and upkeep of the environment, mining, renewable energy and afforestation.
- Identify opportunities for youth entrepreneurship, including through the promotion of local content and public procurement targeted at youth-led businesses.
- Strengthen existing initiatives to provide access to credit for youth, including the 75 billion Nigerian Youth Investment Fund.
- Facilitate the emergence of a sustainable Youth Entrepreneurship Network to provide an institutional setting for support, monitoring and evaluation of youth entrepreneurs.

Key stakeholders

Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development

Federal Ministry of Education

Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment

Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment

Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria

Central Bank of Nigeria

Federal Ministry of Information and Culture

Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research

National Education Research and Development Council

Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association

Nigeria Labour Congress

Trade Union Congress

The Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture

Centre for Management Development

Private sector entrepreneurship promoters

Business schools in tertiary Institutions offering entrepreneurship

Employment

Strategic lines of action 2021-24	Key stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop mentorship programmes to support upcoming entrepreneurs in sectors with potential for job creation, including the digital economy. 	Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand opportunities for youth participation in the digital economy through outsourcing services. 	Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen online and offline career information, counselling and guidance services, promote the availability of accurate and up-to-date information on jobseekers and vacancies and increase the capacity of existing information systems and resource/service centres. 	Federal Ministry for Women Affairs and Social Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support efforts aimed at job matching, including job fairs. 	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the collection and analysis of age- and gender-disaggregated labour market information and enhance the evidence-base on vulnerable groups, such as migrants and young people in fragile settings. 	Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote public employment programmes and employment-intensive investments, including in infrastructure, with a focus on young workers and entrepreneurs. 	Federal Ministry of Science and Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase youth employment in the security services including a carefully and integrated employment expansion scheme for youth employment in all security services, within a pre-determined security job creation fund subject to budget constraints. 	Federal Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote employment generation schemes for youth in fragile settings and explore innovative ways to promote employment, including through mobile training facilities or digital resources. 	National Bureau of Statistics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote incentives for enterprises to hire new graduates. 	Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and further develop youth participation at every level of value chains with high growth and/or job-creation potential, with an emphasis on the comparative advantage of each geopolitical zone. 	Nigeria Labour Congress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of agriculture as a career option and promote access to infrastructure, technology, inputs and finance. 	Trade Union Congress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote private sector engagement and investment in the tourism sector. 	The Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create awareness and capacitate youth on trade agreements that hold the potential for job creation such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). 	Federal Inland Revenue Service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance job creation through the facilitation and implementation of legal migration and mobility programmes with emphasis on youth employment. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Jobs for Peace Programme aimed at engaging vulnerable youth including former combatants in decent and productive employment opportunities in collaboration with the ILO. 	

Equality and rights

Strategic lines of action 2021-24

- Collect data and information on the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people, with a focus on labour market outcomes, informality and rights at work.
- Raise awareness on fundamental principles and rights at work and ensure their extension to young workers, including in the informal economy;
- Promote equal opportunities in youth employment and ensure non-discrimination and equality of treatment for all workers.
- Promote awareness on occupational safety and health and ensure compliance with existing laws and standards.
- Support vulnerable and marginalized groups, including through the provision of training, access to services and information and by raising awareness on rights and safety at work.
- Extend social security to young workers, including in the informal economy.
- Implement the National Employment Policy especially with regard to gender and youth mainstreaming in development projects.
- Implement the National Youth Policy especially as it affects equal treatment between young men and women.
- Implement the National Gender Policy especially relating to labour and employment and gender budgeting.
- Implement the Bill on Persons with Disabilities.

Key stakeholders

Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment
Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development
National Directorate of Employment
Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development
Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association
Nigeria Labour Congress
Trade Union Congress



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Organization



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