

# YOUTH TRANSITION

## FROM SCHOOL TO WORK IN TANZANIA

### A Case Study of the Vocational Education and Training in Tanzania (VETA)

Edited by  
Paschal B. Mihyo  
Donald E. Mmari  
Jamal B. Msami



Organisation for Social Science Research  
in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA)



REPOA



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**ABBREVIATIONS**

ACET	African Centre for Economic Transformation
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AfDB	African Development Bank
CBET	Competence Based Education and Training
BEST	Basic Education Statistics
CCM	Chama cha Mapinduzi
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COMEDAF	Council of Ministers of Education in Africa
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GLS	Generalized Least Squares
ENABLE	Empowering Novel Agro-business-Led Employment
HC	Human Capital
HCT	Human Capital Theory
KAS	Knowledge Skills and Attitudes
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
ILO	International labour Organization
ITEP	Integrated Training for Entrepreneurship Programme
MMSME	Mini, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NACTE	National Council for Technical Education
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NECP	National Employment Creation Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

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MKUKUTA Tanzania	Mkakati wa Kukuza Uchumi na Kupunguza Umaskini
NMTSP	National Medium -Term Strategic Plan
NVTC	National Vocational Training Council
NVTD	National Vocational Training Division
OCGS	Office of the Chief Government Statistician (Zanzibar)
SDL	Skills Development Levy
SET	Social Exchange Theory
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SNV	Netherlands Volunteer Service
STI	Science, Technology and Innovation
STRYDE	Strengthening Rural Youth for Development
STW	School to Work
STWT	School to Work Transition
TCU	Tanzania Commission of Universities
T&DNA	Training and Development Needs Assessment
TET	Technical Education and Training
TIC	Tanzania Investment Centre
TRA	Tanzania Revenue Authority
TSH	Tanzania Shilling
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TVETDP	Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development Programme
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDAP	United Nations Development Assistance Plan

UNESCO	United Nations Education and Scientific Organization
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
VETA	Vocational Education and Training Authority
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WEP	Work Experience Programme
YEE	Youth Economic Empowerment

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Economic downturn and declining social sector performance in the period 1980-1995 have substantially influenced debate on skills supply and demand in Tanzania. The downturn saw a substantial decline in the key skills indicator of literacy that had reached a high of 90.4 per cent less than a decade earlier. Central to the debate were concerns that the key skills inputs such as primary school enrolment and primary-secondary transition rates were either falling or stagnating. While there have been improvements in schooling in recent years, the skills debate has nonetheless continued to be informed not least by an absolute increase in youth unemployment in recent years. Recent estimates suggest that at least 2 out of 5 youth are in a state of long-term joblessness or unemployment for a period of one year or more.

Earlier evaluations have found the high levels of youth unemployment in Tanzania to be paradoxical because of Tanzania's relatively high economic growth and spending on education which in theory ought to have translated into rapid job creation and an abundance of well-educated youth. In exploring the paradox, the evaluation found explanation in the dominance of content-based learning in the education system with limited application in the labour-market. Content-based learning focuses on rote memorization of factual knowledge. Despite being replaced by a competence-based curriculum in 2005, the learning curriculum has continued to be content-focused because of policy and institutional bottlenecks. While content-based learning has remained prominent in most of the courses in secondary and tertiary education, it does not necessarily apply to vocational education and training which has a long history in Tanzania, and it has since its inception focused on orienting trainees, most of them young people, towards the world of work.

Unemployment rates among graduates of vocational educational have historically been lower than those of their primary, secondary or University counterparts. Yet, a recent employers' review of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Tanzania suggests that employers are not satisfied with the skillset of young graduates of the Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA). This is despite multiple initiatives to improve TVET programmes in the country.

In the light of these observations and Tanzania's renewed drive to transform its economy through labour market diversification, it is important to revisit

the debate on youth (un)employment and skills in Tanzania. This edited volume attempts to do just that by examining the institutional capacity of TVET organisations, and the desire of employers to engage TVET graduates.

This book is the result of the efforts of the numerous individuals and institutions that worked with REPOA to understand the barriers to youth employment and transition to work in the context of Tanzania's new industrialization drive in 2018-2019. We extend our sincere gratitude to the Embassy of Ireland in Tanzania for funding the research that informs the larger part of this book and to its staff who provided guidance and technical support during the research period. We thank the Government of Tanzania, through the Prime Minister's Office responsible for Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disability for providing us the opportunity to assess the institutional capability of its TVET organisations and for providing us with one of its staff to work with us on this project. We acknowledge the support of the Vocational and Education Training Authority (VETA), private and faith-based providers, students and employers of TVET graduates for providing access to data and the field sites. We thank all acknowledge the contribution of REPOA researchers and research assistants that participated in data collection. Finally, we thank OSSREA for facilitating technical reviews and publication process.

While we acknowledge the support and contribution from various individuals and institutions, we retain the responsibility for data analysis and the results presented here and for any errors that might be associated with the analysis.

*Editors*



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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

*Paschal B. Mihyo, Donald E. Mmari & Jamal B. Msami*

Employment remains one of the most pressing public policy concerns in the world. Its primacy is driven as much by the direct livelihood effects it has on the population, as it is by the intergenerational spill-overs on public revenue, service provision and the socio-political welfare (Dvouletý et al., 2018; Siddartha et al., 2020). The success of employment policies across the globe is often measured on the extent to which they are able to balance the supply of jobs with demand in an economy (Holzer, 2019). This is a feat that has proved particularly difficult for developing countries with an increasingly youthful and ill-educated workforce like Tanzania (Morriset et al., 2013). The effect of ineffective employment policies in poor countries like Tanzania is circular, manifesting in a retardation of economic growth, transformation, and service delivery, further stymieing policy implementation (United Republic of Tanzania, 2007a, 2008). Employment policy challenges are further compounded by the varied feedbacks of policy inadequacies which threaten peace, and contribute to instability and social disharmony (United Republic of Tanzania, 2007a).

The multiple challenges posed by shortcomings in employment policies have over time compelled closer considerations of not just the costs and benefits of employment but also for the demographics of populations affected (Chari et al., 2017; Cuesta and Budría, 2017). Inspired by Gary Becker's foundational analyses of human capital and employment (1962; 1994), recent employment discourse focusing on young developing countries has explored how to harness the abundance of labour brought by growing population to effect employment outcomes. (Chari et al., 2017; Loprest et al., 2019). Discourse has framed the relationship between youthful growing populations and employment in terms of the quality of available labour, promoting debate on skills and training in much of the developing world (Chari et al., 2017; Morriset et al., 2013). Yet continued sub optimality of employment policies, has seen a rise in the number of youths, both with and without skills, without employment across the globe. Such considerations have opened debates on how skills and training impact on the transition from school to work. These debates are also informed by some previous studies which revealed that the gravity of youth

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