The Challenge
In some areas more than half of young people do not have a job. Even more pressing is the global underemployment rate of 70%.1 Not using the capabilities of young people hampers economic growth and may lead to social instability, driving young people to migrate.1 Meaningful employment for young people is essential to achieve sustainable economic development; however they often lack relevant market skills and are not provided real opportunities.

SNV’s Opportunities for Youth Employment (OYE) is a market based approach to sustainably reduce youth unemployment and under-employment. We act as a match maker between young people and private companies. Our model is based on SNV’s decades’ long experience in value chain and inclusive market development for the agriculture, energy and sanitation sectors.

Our Impact
- 25,000 young people have enrolled in one of OYE projects
- 10,000 jobs created
- projects in 6 Countries

1. World Employment Social Outlook, UN Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth
The Opportunity
We use our experience in local markets to match young people with opportunities in growth sectors.

Employment in Energy
The renewable energy sector is attractive to many young people because of its technological appeal and fast growth. The production, promotion and distribution of clean energy technologies, is an increasingly attractive route for young people to get meaningful and sustainable (self-) employment.

Employment in Agriculture
The agriculture sector is viewed as an unfavourable employment opportunity, due to a lack of economic advancement in traditional subsistence agriculture; the sector will, however, have to professionalise to meet increasing global demands for food in the coming decades. This will open up new possibilities for young people to grow their own profitable business.

Our Approach
Using our extensive experience in local markets, we connect companies and unemployed young people with one another. We train young people on life and leadership skills. We cooperate with vocational training centres and local companies to provide technical skills training and apprenticeships. We match trained young people with employment options in local growth markets, and continue to mentor them deep into the job. We support them to access credit facilities through peer savings and lending associations.

We partner with local training centres and governments to ensure our results are sustainable.

Basic and leadership skills training
We engage community leaders to encourage local unemployed young people to join the OYE programme. We select applicants on their enthusiasm and motivation to participate. We strengthen young people's basic life and leadership skills. We provide training on issues such as responsibility, time management and financial literacy.

Vocational training and apprenticeships
Based on our expertise in value chain development and knowledge of local markets, SNV selects markets with growth potential for young people. We specifically identify opportunities that are accessible and attractive for young women. We work with local vocational training centres and local service companies to provide young people with practical and market-relevant skills.

Our partners and donors
SNV works on youth employment in several countries in Africa. Our Opportunities for Youth Employment is an integrated approach to address the different causes that create chronic youth unemployment. Our experience and results make us a respected partner for many donors, partners and governments.

Our experts works with the following partners and donors specifically.

Our OYE project donors:
The MasterCard Foundation (MCF), USAID, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN), the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) and the European Union (EU)

Our OYE project partners:
Ministries of Youth and ICT, Rwanda Energy Group, Workforce Development Agency, Business Development Fund in Rwanda, Youth and Sports in Mozambique and regional Vocational (VETA) and Business Development (SIDO) institutions in Tanzania.

SNV cooperates with local companies to create apprenticeships that provide participants with practical technical skills with a focus on (self-) employment.

Job placement or self-employment
After completing their training and apprenticeship, we use our trusted position with local businesses to connect participants with concrete opportunities for (self-) employment. We establish saving and lending groups that allow participants to access credit and enterprise development. We continue to mentor our graduates in their employment or enterprise.

Improving policies and curriculums
We collaborate with authorities to develop youth employment friendly policies, such as governmental credit mechanisms. We work together with vocational training centres to make their curriculums more responsive to market demands. We contribute to youth inclusive business models for local companies, for example by promoting youth inclusive out-grower schemes or by creating apprenticeship programmes.
“In the past, we all would immediately spend the money to satisfy our personal desires. But now we know better. We will buy what we need for the second season and use the money that will remain to build houses for members and send our nephews and children to school.”
Opportunities for Youth Employment
Tanzania, Mozambique and Rwanda | MCF | €12.4 million | 2013 - 2018

The “Opportunities for Youth Employment” (OYE) project reduces unemployment amongst rural young people in Tanzania, Rwanda and Mozambique. The project aims to reach 20,500 rural out of school young people, leading to employment for 18,500 of them and the establishment of 400 new youth led enterprises. Currently we have trained more than 14,000 young people. Over 9,000 of them entered employment and 600 new youth-led enterprises have been established. Young women currently constitute 35% of the outreach, against a 40% target. SNV will endeavour to enrol more women, for example by using female role models for professions with a male image or by highlighting jobs that can be combined with maintaining a household.

Opportunities for Youth Employment – Tanzania Central Corridor
Tanzania | SDC | €4.3 million | 2016 - 2018

This project is an extension of the existing OYE project to the Central Corridor geographical area in Tanzania. SDC added a €4.3 million grant investment to the existing OYE concept. In the project young people can seek employment in crop farming and livestock, in value-addition activities such as milling, and in services such as equipment supply, solar technology installation, and latrine construction. Overall, the project aims to reach more than 6,500 young people in three sectors. During the start-up year, 531 women and 631 men gained self-employment through 81 newly established youth-led enterprises.

Youth, Advocacy, Women, Work and Alliances (YAWWA)
Niger | USAID | €1.9 million | 2014 – 2017

Years of drought in Niger have degraded agricultural lands, leading to unemployment and forcing men in rural areas to migrate to urban areas for income. Young women who remain do not have many options to earn a living. Our “Youth, Advocacy, Women, Work and Alliances” (YAWWA) project targets local innovators, young social entrepreneurs and youth organisations so that they can grow their start-ups into profitable businesses by providing them with the proper knowledge, tools and resources. These businesses will create employment, economic growth and increase local resilience. In the first 3 years, the project has trained 4,501 people (113% of project target; 48% were women); participating enterprises employed 330 people and generated €154,000 in revenue.

www.snv.org
Our Experience

Opportunities for Youth Employment in Beira corridor
Mozambique | EU | €1.5 million 2015 – 2019

The project aims to reach 7,500 rural young people in 8 districts in the Beira Corridor. The project will create rural employment information centres and will build the capacity of vocational training centres to provide curriculums that are more tailored to the needs of the market. In 2016, SNV provided life skills training to 3,750 young people (30% were women). We trained lead beekeepers and farmers to enable them to showcase good agricultural practices to their peers. We selected young people to become trainers themselves, who in turn train and coach other participants. SNV also trained 300 young people in business management and entrepreneurship to help them develop their own business.

Youth Employability through Enterprise and Skills Development (YES)
Uganda | EU | €1.0 million | 2014 – 2017

Uganda’s labour force will add 10 million people to the labour market by 2020, creating an urgent need for meaningful jobs and equitable growth. Local vocational training centres are notably weak and market parties are unable to understand and address the gaps between training programming and the local labour markets. “Youth Employability through Enterprise and Skills Development” (YES) aims to link formal and non-formal skills training by increasing the market relevance of vocational training programmes and simultaneously supporting companies to provide proper skills training to local young people. To date the YES project has trained 3,000 people, of which nearly 1,500 were trained in vocational training centres using the YES project life skills and entrepreneurship manual. Due to the training programme, more than 5,500 young people, directly or indirectly, have gained (self) employment.
"I love technology," says Rosalie "OYE has taught me that when you love something, you excel in it. Nothing is impossible once you put your mind to it, practise and get better." After an entry interview, she joined a group of young people who would learn how to install solar systems. The group received basic life skills training from Opportunities for Youth Employment (OYE) project trainers and vocational training at the Mobisol Akademy. “Together with others, I learned how to care for customers, how to educate them on using the solar systems, and how to conduct after-sales follow-up.” she recalls. After the training programme, Rosalie was offered an internship in which she excelled by performing the highest number of solar panel installations. As a result, Rosalie was offered a position at Mobisol and began her work as a technician in charge of the Southern Province. She has since expanded her area of responsibility with two districts in the Western Province.

Rosalie aspires to open an electronics shop in her home district after her career as a solar systems technician. She also plans to acquire some land for investment. Once her siblings finish secondary school, she hopes to build a house on one of her plots of land. Until then, she can be found on a rooftop installing a solar panel.
In Nampula province, OYE’s comprehensive approach has enabled Amândio Inácio (22 years) to start his own poultry growing business. He participated in basic life skills training provided by the OYE project. Novos Horizontes (NH), a poultry company started an out-grower scheme and training programme with young people in the area, due to its partnership with the OYE project. Amândio was also able to access a loan from Fund Support for Youth Initiatives (FAIJ) of the National Directorate of Youth and Sport, an OYE partner. The OYE project supported Amândio to create his business case for his loan application.

"I learnt a lot from the training. Lessons I picked from the joint supervision will help us revise our course contents and tailor them to the current needs of the job market." – Orio Wilson, Principal Nile Institute of Management Studies, Arua District

One of the challenges at the beginning of the YES project was the negative attitude most young people have towards agriculture. Many young farmers had tried and failed to have good harvests due to erratic and unreliable weather patterns. Furthermore, they had no peers who had succeeded and who could mentor them. The Young Model Farmer (YMF) approach was thus an excellent opportunity for young farmers to learn from their peers in the agri-business sector and for SNV to strengthen the informal transfer of skills. SNV trained 33 YMFs as principal trainers to support local rural young farmers. They were active in growing commodities ranging from tomatoes, onions, Irish potatoes, cabbage to beans.

Mahaman Sani Mati Admulmulaha founded the Company for the Fabrication of Musical Instruments (CFIM – Admulmulah) to create employment opportunities for young people in Niamey as well as to promote traditional culture among young Nigeriens. His company trains young people in to build instruments, with a focus on the traditional Nigerien two-string guitar, the gurimi. Mahaman received a grant, and financial and administrative training, from YAWWA to train 20 young people to produce and sell gurimi. Several students have already sold their first gurimi and are continuing to produce the musical instrument. Mahaman Sani will continue to scale-up CFM-Admulmulah with help from some of his students.
SNV is a not-for-profit international development organisation, working in Agriculture, Renewable Energy, and Water, Sanitation & Hygiene. Founded in the Netherlands in 1965, we have built a long-term, local presence in more than 30 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Our global team of local and international advisors works with local partners to equip communities, businesses and organisations with the tools, knowledge and connections they need to increase their incomes and gain access to basic services – empowering them to break the cycle of poverty and guide their own development.

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