**TEXT : Youth employment**

Cases of youth unemployment in Africa is exacerbated by dismal growth in economies in many parts of the continent coupled with other social problems live poverty and disease. With a large population to take care of the market for labour is overstretched from Johannesburg to Tangiers and cannot accommodate the influx of young job seekers leading to shortage or in some cases the total lack of employment for the educated and able population.

Education too has a role to play in worsening the situation. The quality of education in many African states is wanting with students getting equipped with skills that are out of touch with the requirements of the job market. The curricula used do not churn graduates with the necessary skills to match the jobs they intend to take up. HIV also worsens the situation as it lowers productivity and life expectancy of many of the youth in Africa

The effects of unemployment are both social as well as economic. The jobless youth are forced to fend for themselves through alternative means including the informal sector and in severe cases prostitution and criminal activity. With rising migration to the urban areas, youth in the urban areas find considerable competition worsening their situation and prospects. The effects on the economy are far reaching as far as output is concerned. Unemployment leads to wastage of labor and this leads to the economy operating at less than capacity. The economy thus experiences a fall in production of goods and services.

Poor economic growth and limited resources in education, health and finance worsens the state of unemployment in Africa. With less than average economic performance availability of resources is hampered. These socioeconomic resources face competition from the ever growing population leading to a cycle of more and more unemployment. Inadequate aggregate demand to sustain the economy, poor skills among the young population and the size of the labour force that comprises the youth are cited are the major causes of unemployment.

In trying to understand the demographic factors affecting the rate of unemployment in Africa, serious attention should be given to the sub Saharan region. There is a projected increase in the youth labor force more than any part of the world. Fertility rates are falling at much lower rate than the rest of Africa. This implies that the young population is experiencing an increase not sustainable by the current employment levels.

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