PEP research in action
Easing school to work transitions in Benin

INSAE, 2014: School-to-Work Transition Survey (SWTS)

- Can take up to 4 years for young people to find 1st job after leaving school
- In 2014, only 11% of youth aged 15-29 had completed their transition to the labour market
- Main obstacles to youth employment are lack of:
  - vocational and technical education
  - professional experience
  - job search assistance

Since 2007, several government initiatives (programs, agencies) introduced to reduce youth unemployment

Focus mostly on providing entrepreneurship education and work experience, but to high school graduates

Local PEP researchers investigate whether working before leaving school can help youth transition more easily into Benin’s labour market

METHOD:
Multi-equation model within the counterfactual framework to evaluate data from the (SWTS) for 15 to 29 year-olds in Benin

“Working while studying” defined as work undertaken by students during and/or outside of the school season (evenings/weekends and holidays, respectively).

Findings

Working while studying eases and reduces the school-to-work transition

Especially:
- When working experiences are combined with apprenticeships.
- For youth who left school with at least a secondary education.
- For men. It was not found to make a difference to the duration of women’s transition periods.
- If the work is undertaken only during the summer break or holidays (not evenings and weekends during the school year).

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School-to-work transition durations for youth in Benin (months)

Recommendations for policymaking

- Youth employment interventions should be reoriented to promote labour market experience alongside education, rather than after high school graduation.
- Additional measures are needed to support young women who wish to enter the labour market.

Informing national policy processes

2016-2018: Team consults with government ministries/agencies related to employment and education.

October 2017: After discussions with the PEP team, the Minister of SMEs and Promotion of Employment (MPMEPE) sets up a policy discussion group

- For PEP team to share/discuss findings with experts/advisors from:
  - Ministry of SMEs and Promotion of Employment (MPMEPE)
  - Ministry of Secondary, Technical and Vocational Education (MTFPAS)
  - Fund for Continuing Professional Development & Apprenticeship (FODEFCA)
- Discussions (ongoing) have already led to the findings informing the revision of the “Technical Education and Vocational Training” policy (FODEFCA)

August 2018: The Bureau of Analysis & Investigation of the Presidency invites team to share findings during a special advisory meeting with high-level officials from FODEFCA, MPMEPE, and the National Agency for Promotion of Employment (ANPE)

February 2019: team organizes PEP national policy conference

Attended by: ANPE, FODEFCA, MPMEPE, MTFPAS, Observatory of Employment and Training (ONEF), but also private sector, CSOs, NGOs and academia.

Resulted in: collective statement of the need and will to improve synergies between various state structures for employment, and with academia

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