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SECONDARY EDUCATION IN AFRICA:

Preparing Youth for the Future of Work

Technology is rapidly changing the future of work around the globe. Africa is in the early stages of a technological revolution that is changing the nature of work on the continent.

- Over the next 12 years, the number of young people in the African labour market will increase to 375 million.
- By 2035, there will be more young people entering Africa's workforce each year than in the rest of the globe combined.
- With expanding access to secondary education and the small fraction of students in Africa that complete university level studies, secondary school will increasingly become the main bridge to work for most youth.
- Impacts of technology make the future of work unpredictable; success in this uncertainty requires quality education that equips youth with foundational knowledge and flexible 21st century skills.
- With access to quality education and productive employment, particularly for girls and young women, Sub-Saharan Africa will be well positioned to reap the benefits of the demographic dividend.

Given the transformative potential of the growing youth population, the shifts in African labour markets, and the evolving nature of work, fundamental changes are needed to successfully equip young people to be successful in work and in life. Significant challenges remain in access, quality, and relevance of secondary education.

As part of our Young Africa Works strategy, Mastercard Foundation is working to drive systemic change in education with the aim of increasing youth employment to reduce poverty.

Collaborative Research

Mastercard Foundation, together with a group of strategic partners, has initiated a research effort to examine progress in secondary education on the continent and to propose forward-looking recommendations. This collaborative report, entitled **Secondary Education in Africa: Preparing Youth for the Future of Work**, is expected to be released in 2019.

Rethinking and reforming secondary education - including what young people learn and how they learn it - is necessary to make education relevant for youth employment or entrepreneurship in a dynamic and globalized labour market.

The research is focusing on the role of secondary education in preparing African youth for the future of work, with emphasis on **ensuring youth acquire the skills, knowledge, and competencies necessary to succeed** in a dynamic and globalized labour market.

The research will present a review of current knowledge and evidence on the state of secondary education in Sub-Saharan Africa, and will put forward practical recommendations for policy makers and other stakeholders. The research is informed by the needs and experiences expressed by government officials, employers, and youth. Emphasis has been put on identifying successful policies and areas of significant progress, with case studies from across the continent.

The report addresses four main themes:

Preparing Youth for the Future of Work

- *What does the future of work look like in Africa and what is the role of secondary education in preparing youth to take advantage of these opportunities?*

Ensuring Relevant Knowledge & Skills

- *What skills and competencies do young people in Africa need to prepare for the workforce of the future and what works in helping youth acquire these skills?*

Designing Systems to Foster Improved Learning

- *How should secondary education be structured to ensure young people achieve the skills and competencies they need?*

Meeting the Needs of Out-of-School Youth and Displaced Populations

- *How can governments ensure access to quality, relevant secondary education or its equivalent for out-of-school youth and displaced populations?*

Mastercard Foundation is one of the largest private funders of education in Africa. Our new strategy, Young Africa Works, sets out an ambitious goal for the next decade: by 2030, our work will enable 30 million young people in Africa, especially young women, to secure employment they see as dignified and fulfilling. Using youth employment as a key measure of socio-economic progress, we aim to help millions of people to find a pathway out of poverty.

For more information on the Secondary Education in Africa Report, please contact:

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