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Infrastructure jobs and inclusive growth: issues in policy and planning

Executive Summary

- In order to drive sustained employment growth, policymakers need to prioritize jobs that pay well, appeal to a large pool of potential job seekers, and promote long-lasting economic opportunities. Infrastructure jobs are well positioned to do just that.
- NIAF has been supporting infrastructure planning in Kaduna State.
- A key aspect of this support has focused on infrastructure jobs and how they can be structured to expand opportunities for a socially heterogeneous 'out of work' population.
- The 2016 Kaduna State budget targets the generation of **200,000 jobs** in **11** 'employment clusters,' **8** of which are direct infrastructure job categories.

The Challenges

- Policy makers typically tend to assume an automatic trickle down of infrastructure benefits (including jobs) to everyone and do not integrate social inclusion targets at planning stage.
- Policy commitments to social cohesion very often do not contain clear guidance on how to translate policy rhetoric into action.
- Traditional donor support around infrastructure delivery focuses less on planning for inclusive outcomes and more on addressing the technical deficits on the supply side.

Inclusive growth

Policy and Planning

- Identify skills gaps
- Skills Realignment
- Promote equity in access to emerging, training and work opportunities
- Make labour market information widely available
- Track and assist emerging MSMEs that provide infrastructure support services

Create infrastructure jobs

The NIAF Approach

NIAF provided technical assistance for the purposes of:

- **Developing a skills mapping tool which was used to generate disaggregated data from unemployed persons**. The tool was administered among one million unemployed persons in the 23 LGAs while the data analysis was based on feedback from a random sample of 400 persons per LGA. 4349 of this sample were men, 3451 were women while 13 were persons with disabilities.

- **Testing the tool and training 54 officers of the State Rural Development Agency** to administer the skills mapping survey.

- **Collating and analysing the data from the survey**. The data indicates that Kaduna state has a potentially large human resource pool to recruit from. 93% of those surveyed fall within the economically active age bracket of between 15 – 64 years. Most o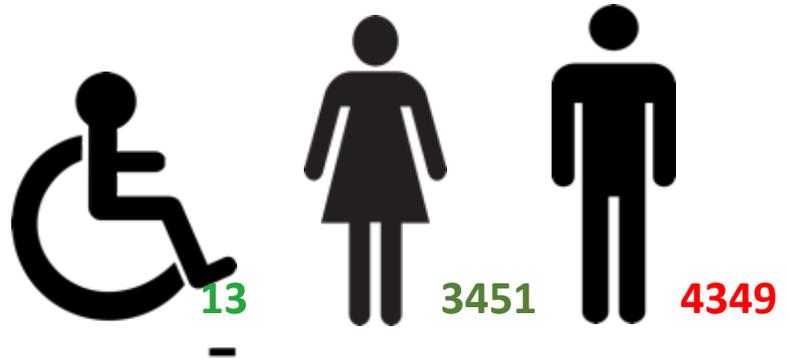f the unemployed are youth (58% of those surveyed), which presents huge opportunities but also heightens attendant risks such as vulnerability to high conflict and crime rates. Respondents with university degrees made up the smallest proportion of those interviewed (1.4%); 3.5% had gone through some form of vocational training while a larger proportion (23.9%) had a maximum qualification of secondary school education.

Figure 1: showing disaggregation of survey respondents

Indicator	Percentage of Respondents
Ages 15 – 64	93%
Unemployed youth	58%
University Educated	1.4%
Vocational training	3.5%
Maximum Qualification (Secondary School)	23.9%
Percentage of respondents interested in infrastructure jobs	12.7%

- **Developing a *'skills for infrastructure jobs'* baseline report** for the Kaduna state government. This report aims to provide information and policy guidance, which will support the process of planning for infrastructure jobs.

- **Identifying key policy and planning messages.** These focus on how infrastructure jobs can expand opportunities and access for a diverse 'out of work' population.

Key policy messages

- In order for infrastructure jobs to meet inclusive growth targets, it is important to **assess the adequacy of the existing skills stock** and whether this can actually meet emerging demands in the labor market. Not

only will this minimize waste, it will enable a productivity upsurge as well as an overall improvement in the State's economic outlook.

- An infrastructure master plan should identify and **respond to infrastructure related skills/capability shortfalls.** The plan should include a skills realignment programme, which seeks to address shortages in key sectors and specialist trades.

- Access to emerging jobs is sometimes delineated by perceptions around the **gendered division of labour in non - social sectors**. However, the Kaduna survey showed that women are sometimes interested in acquiring skills for jobs that are usually associated with men. For instance, 5.4% of female respondents were interested in training to become electricians compared to 11% of males. Also, all the persons with disabilities indicated they would prefer the opportunity to earn an income than beg for a living. These realities call for **equity and flexibility in facilitating access to skills upgrade and vocational training opportunities.**

- As part of the Government's overall job creation strategy, it is important to **provide support for emerging MSME's** that provide infrastructure support services.

Meeting with community leaders at the start of the 'skills for infrastructure jobs' survey

The Outcomes

- The key policy and planning messages from the survey respond directly to the 4 prevailing features in the State's labour market.

- These are: high youth unemployment; a high level of disconnect between the unemployed and labor market realities; deviations from established perceptions around gendered divisions of labour; and the fact that most of those who were interviewed (32.9%) would prefer to trade than do infrastructure work.

- Proposed policy responses to this include: introducing youth apprenticeship and flagship infrastructure work programmes; improving access to job market information; promoting equitable access to jobs and training in infrastructure sectors; generating interest in infrastructure jobs for instance by establishing skills grants and skills development programmes.

Implemented by: **Adam Smith** International