



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# BENIN YOUTH ASSESSMENT REPORT

**Submitted in response to:**

RFA 680-11-003 Equip 3:

*Earning, Learning and Skill Development Opportunities for Out-of-School Children and Youth*

**Submitted by:**

Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC)

**September 30, 2011**

**Educational Quality  
Improvement Program 3**

Benin Youth Employment and  
Entrepreneurial Skills Needs  
Assessment

## List of Acronyms

ABC : Afokantan Benin Cashew

AFD : French Development Agency

ANPE : National Employment Agency (L'Agence Nationale pour la Promotion de l'Emploi)

AQP : Vocational Skills License (Attestation de Qualification Professionnelle )

BAC : High School Diploma (Baccalauréat)

BEAT : Tropical Agriculture Certificate (Brevet d'Etude Agricole Tropicale)

BEPC : Primary Cycle Certificate (Brevet d'Etude du Premier Cycle)

BTS : Higher Technical Certificate (Brevet de Technicien Supérieur)

CAP : Professional Aptitude Certificate (Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle)

CEP : Primary School Diploma (Certificat d'Etude Primaire Elémentaire)

CESLY : Core Education Skills for Liberian Youth

CETA : College of Agriculture and Technology (Collège d'Enseignement Technique Agricole)

CM : Occupational Center (Centre Métier)

CNAB : Benin National Confederation of Artisans (Confédération Nationale des Artisans du Bénin)

CQP : Vocational Skills Certificate (Certificat de Qualification Professionnelle)

CQM : Occupational Skills Certificate (Certificat de Qualification au Métier)

CRS : Catholic Relief Services

DANIDA : Danish International Development Agency

DEA : Post-Graduate Diploma/Doctorate (Diplôme d'Etude Approfondie)

DEAT : Tropical Agriculture Diploma (Diplôme d'Etude Agricole Tropicale)

DFA : Apprenticeship Completion Diploma (Diplôme de Fin d'Apprentissage)

DTI : Technical School Diploma (Diplôme de Technicien Industriel)

DTS : Higher Technical Diploma (Diplôme de Technicien Supérieur)

EFAT : Traditional Apprenticeship Completion Exams (Examens de Fin d'Apprentissage Traditionnel)

EMICoV : Integrated Modular Survey of Household Living Conditions (l'Enquête Modulaire Intégrée sur les Conditions de vie des Ménages)

FGD : Focus Group Discussion

FODEFCA : Fund for the Development of Continuing Vocational Training and Learning (Le Fonds de Développement de la Formation Professionnelle Continue et de l'Apprentissage)

GIZ : German Company for International Cooperation

GoB : Government of Benin

HITT : High Impact Tourism Training

ILO: International Labor Office

INSAE : National Institute of Statistics and Economic Analysis (l'Institut National de Statistique et de l'Analyse Economique)

KAB: Know About Business Program

MEMP : Ministry of Nursery and Primary Education (Ministère des Enseignements Maternel et Primaire)

MIS : Management Information System

MFI : Microfinance Institutions

NGO : Non-Governmental Organization

PAEFE: Project to Support Training and Education for Excluded Children (Projet d'Appui à l'Education et à la Formation des Enfants)

PAPEJ : Project Promoting the Employment Youth (Le Projet d'Appui à la Promotion d'Emploi des Jeunes)

PCA : Accelerated Course Program (Programme des Cours Accelerees)

SIYB : Start and Improve Your Business Program

SNV : Netherlands Development Organization

SSA : Sub-Saharan Africa

TVET : Technical and Vocational Education and Training

YSO : Youth-Serving Organization

# BENIN YOUTH ASSESSMENT REPORT

## Table of Contents

### Acronyms

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Key Findings .....	1
Recommendations .....	3
<b>I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Purpose of the Assessment.....	5
Assessment Objectives .....	5
<b>II. ASSESSMENT DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>6</b>
II.1 Assessment Team .....	6
II.2.Principles.....	7
II.3 Process .....	7
II.4 Study Limitations .....	10
<b>III. FINDINGS: THE SITUATION OF YOUTH EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT IN BENIN.....</b>	<b>11</b>
III.1 Profiles of Beninese Youth .....	11
III.2 Profile of Youth-Serving Organizations.....	18
III.3 Profile of the Informal and Formal Economy and Employment as Relevant to Youth.....	21
III.4 Profile of Technical and Vocational Training Offerings for Youth .....	27
III.5 Profile of Alternative Education Offerings for Youth .....	35
III.6 Profile of Donor & Government of Benin Youth Policies and Programs .....	38
III.7 Overview of Relevant Youth Programs in West Africa .....	42
<b>IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BENIN OUT-OF SCHOOL YOUTH PROGRAMMING .....</b>	<b>44</b>
IV.1 Youth Beneficiaries with Greatest Unmet Needs & Most Potential for Impact.....	44
IV.2 Support to Youth Serving Organizations .....	44
IV.3 Vocational & Employment Training.....	45
IV.4 Alternative Education/"2nd Chance" Programs for youth .....	47
IV.5 Potential Partners within Government of Benin and among YSOs .....	47
IV.6 Private Sector Engagement .....	48

<b>V. A WAY FORWARD .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>VI. SOURCES .....</b>	<b>50</b>
VII. ANNEXES .....	54
Annex 1: List of Key Informants & Organizations Interviewed .....	55
Annex 2: Schedule of Activities .....	60
Annex 3 : Table of Key Findings & Recommendations by Objective .....	70
Annex 4: Youth Focus Group Methodology & Protocol .....	74

## Tables/Figures

Table 1: Literacy rate by area of residence (in %) .....	12
Table 2: Youth Literacy Rates by Gender (in %) .....	12
Table 3: Labor force participation (10 years +) by department and gender (in %) .....	14
Table 4: Youth Serving Organizations Interviewed and Visited .....	18
Table 5: Sectors of Employment, 2006-2007 (%).....	24
Table 6: Distribution of Institutions Offering CQP .....	30
Table 7: List of Centres de Metier (CM) .....	31
Figure 1: Rate of Workforce Activity by Sex and Age (2006) .....	15
Figure 2: Education System and Basic Training in Benin .....	28

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EDC is pleased to submit the final Benin Youth Assessment Report. This report is based on a request from USAID/Benin under the EQUIP3 program to conduct a Benin youth assessment mission with the purpose of: i) providing USAID with in-depth information about Benin's large out-of-school youth population--their level of education and/or training, the jobs they have or want, and the employment and entrepreneurial skills they need--taking into consideration gender, age and educational background, plus how these factors relate to Benin's job market, and ii) providing practical recommendations to USAID for supporting out-of-school youth in job skills and entrepreneurial training. After conducting an analysis of existing Government, Ministry, donor and stakeholders' initiatives targeting out-of-school youth, and identifying critical needs and leverage points for providing employment and entrepreneurial training and support to this population, the assessment presents USAID with strategic recommendations that could inform future programming.

The Assessment team was led by Nancy Taggart (Team Leader & Youth Development Specialist), Chris Murray (Livelihoods and Informal Economy Specialist), Evans Jadotte (Labor Market Specialist), Dissou Zomahoun (Employment Training Specialist-Swiss Contact), Latifou Yessoufou (Local Non-formal Education Specialist) and Adwoa Atta-Krah (Youth Research and Logistics Coordinator). Youth focus groups were led by youth assessors and translators: Rene Aderomou, Latifatou Biga, Achile Ditchoni, Boris Houenou, Zenabou Bah L'Imam, and Martine de Souza.

### **Key Findings**

DHS data for Benin from 2006 estimates that out-of-school youth age 15-25 form 60.82% of the overall youth population at this age. According to a study by UNICEF in 2006, there are approximately 700,000 out-of-school youth between the ages of 10-17 who have either never been to school or dropped out prior to completing primary education, equal to 46% of the total population of children at this age. Out-of-school youth lack basic skills and competencies to help them pursue income-generation opportunities, return to formal school or enroll in training. Literacy rates among youth are around 60% across the country, but in rural areas are around 48%, with the lowest levels in Alibori and Attacora regions, with 21.7% and 37.4%, respectively. Reasons for the significant school dropout rates are directly linked to poverty and social-cultural norms. Throughout all of the regions where this study conducted focus group discussions (FGDs), youth as well as parents, most often cited a lack of financial means by their families as one of the main reasons for having left school.

Older out-of-school youth, consistently articulate the necessity of making money to support themselves as well as their parents. This reality shapes their decisions and their visions for the future. Once out of formal school, youth gravitate toward trades and trainings that either offer perceived rapid opportunities for making money, or that are already familiar to them. When asked the rationale for selecting respective métiers or trainings, youth often explained that they got involved because either a parent or family member was already involved in that field. Additionally, youth almost always aspired to join a métier that was visible and popular in their community, which further highlights the importance of exposure.

Many of the youth-serving organization (YSOs) visited and interviewed are implementing pilot initiatives that allow them to use more innovative approaches, adapted to the changing needs and circumstances of the young people with whom they work. Many of the YSOs work with youth who are otherwise not being reached--the most vulnerable minority groups—"talibes," market children, street children, trafficked girls, Peuhl communities, and fisher villages.

Approximately 95% of the Beninese workforce depends on the informal economy for their livelihoods (60.5% in 1992, 70.2% in 2002).<sup>1</sup> This reflects an ever-increasing shift to the informal sector, which accounts for 70% of Benin's GDP.<sup>2</sup> Youth form a significant part of this sector. Generally, in Benin and in most developing countries, women and female youth's economic participation is concentrated in the informal sector. A major sector that attracts a large number of out-of-school youth, including female and male youth, is the handicraft sector. Other sectors of job and livelihood opportunity for youth include tourism, agro-processing, agriculture and telecommunications.

Vocational training programs currently offer out-of-school youth the most accessible option for gaining skills to enter the job market. For youth with a Primary School Diploma (CEP) degree or above, there are various options for vocational training in various sectors including agriculture. However, for youth with less than a CEP degree, the employment training options are very few. The Vocational Skills Certificate (CQP) and Occupational Skills Certificate (CQM) degrees tracks have created new training opportunities for youth with lower education; however, many out of school youth are unable to take advantage of these due to costs, lack of French literacy. Other support services needed to apply training such as coaching, mentoring and access to credit are weak or non-existent in current vocational training offerings.

There are two main models of alternative education in Benin that are led by donors and implemented by the youth-serving organizations highlighted earlier in this report: the UNICEF-supported Ministry of Nursery and Primary Education (MEMP) model and the Cooperation Suisse-supported "Projet d'Appui à l'Education et à la Formation des Enfants Exclus du Système Educatif" (PAEFE) model.

Significant momentum has been building within government and the donor community around the concept of an Accelerated Course Program (PCA) and there is strong political will to promote it, as indicated by the MEMP support of validating the PCA concept. In addition, the government's policy of "Faire Faire" creates an operational framework for how to engage both government and civil society organizations to implement programs.

The numerous existing initiatives within government and led by other donors in the area of alternative education and employment training for youth serve as a foundation for USAID to leverage in order to maximize impact. The significant investment from other donors particularly in the vocational training sector serves as an excellent platform for developing complementary services or support. However, coordination between donors could be strengthened and resources can be spread thin between multiple government initiatives.

---

<sup>1</sup> African Economic Outlook. (2011). Country notes: Benin 2011; Walther, R. (June, 2006). Vocational training in the informal sector: Report on the Benin field survey.

<sup>2</sup> African Economic Outlook. (2011). Country notes: Benin 2011.

## Recommendations

This study has identified three youth cohorts in Benin whose needs appear to be either overlooked or insufficiently met by planned or existing youth education or employment training programs:

- ✓ **Out of school young women age 15-25**
- ✓ **Out-of-school male and female youth age 10-14**
- ✓ **Out-of-school male and female youth with education level less than CM1 level**

## Support to Youth Serving Organizations

---

- Supporting a *youth-led development approach* to youth programming would channel funding through youth associations and groups of youth to build their capacity to develop programs that worth toward livelihood creation and training.
- Building on the existing network of youth centers/spaces (“Maisons des jeunes”) to develop educational and recreational spaces for youth.
- Continue to support community sensitization campaigns related to girls rights (education, civic participation), early marriage and trafficking for communities and young women.

## Vocational & Employment Training

---

- The *development of new training specializations for agriculture, tourism, and culture (i.e., music, dance, arts) within the CQP and CQM certificate programs* would attract male and female youth. This effort would promote more diversified training opportunities for out-of-school youth, help to increase the value of those trades in the market place and position male and female youth for more strategic income-generation activities. One immediate-term approach could be to collaborate with SNV’s High Impact Tourism Training (HITT) program that is targeting the creation of informal jobs within the tourism sector.
- There is a need for a *package of “Work Readiness Skills” trainings* that would be adaptable, according to the needs of training beneficiaries and local contexts. This package could be integrated into the PCA or CQP/CQM training certificates programs.
- Greater investment in “*accompaniment*” of trainees would have a strong impact in equipping them with skills and linkages for success in starting a business. Accompaniment should consist of coaching, mentoring and linking to credit.
- As part of coaching and business support services, efforts should encourage a spirit of collaboration and team work among youth, with the goal of promoting the idea of working together to form cooperatives. This would help respond to challenges youth graduates face in obtaining resources to start a business on their own.
- Strategies for *promoting role models* particularly to female youth would strengthen alternative education and vocational training programs.



- There are *innovative models* already in practice in Benin that can be expanded or replicated to strengthen sustainability of training models and scale up youth's small businesses.
- There is a need for *support to scale micro businesses* to help increase entrepreneurs' revenues, allow for hiring more employees, and ultimately move youth out of subsistence-level economic activities. The Government's "Agence National pour la Promotion des PME's" might be a possible partner to support.

---

### Alternative Education/"2nd Chance" Programs for youth

- The development of a *literacy and numeracy skills upgrading or "mise a niveau" program* to help prepare youth who lack sufficient French and math skills to qualify for the CQP program is a relatively 'quick impact' activity for out of school youth that would greatly strengthen youth's opportunities to access training opportunities.
- *Mother's Associations* used through other education programs in Benin can serve as a model for engaging young women as part of the operationalization of a PCA program. The experience of teaching in primary level has showed that associations of mères d'élèves play a significant role in promoting access to, attendance and performance of girls.

---

### Potential Partners within Government of Benin and among YSOs

- *Collaborate with other donors* through the existing "Cadre de Coordination" donor group on Education to promote coordination and synergies between donors and ministries.
- Support key ministries, such as the Ministry of Secondary Education and Professional Training or Ministry of Maternal and Primary Education, to *create and maintain an Management Information System (MIS) for vocational training and alternative education programs*.

---

### Private Sector Engagement

- In order to equip the private sector with the tools and structure to allow it to contribute more substantively to the design of vocational training programs and to strengthen the understanding among trainees of what businesses will expect from apprentices and employees, there is a need for creating a "*référentiel des compétences*" for each type of diploma as a basis for the design of training programs.
- Another strategy to revitalize the role of private sector in vocational training programs would be to pilot in select regions in Benin the creation of *local or regional level public-private alliances*. Local public-private alliances can be more effective than national level mechanisms *for engaging the private sector* because local stakeholders are more connected to the communities and their needs and decision-making about resource allocation is localized and tends to be less bureaucratic.
- Public and private sector collaboration at the regional level could help to *generate and disseminate job market data* at the regional level in order to inform vocational training programs and the selection of trades for training centers that are tailored to local market realities.

## I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT

### *Purpose of the Assessment*

In May 2011, USAID/Benin requested Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC). through its EQUIP3 program, conduct a Benin youth assessment mission with the purpose of: i) providing USAID with in-depth information about Benin's large out-of-school youth population--their level of education and/or training, the jobs they have or want, and the employment and entrepreneurial skills they need--taking into consideration gender, age and educational background, plus how these factors relate to Benin's job market, and ii) providing practical recommendations to USAID for supporting out-of-school youth in job skills and entrepreneurial training. After conducting an analysis of existing Government, Ministry, donor and stakeholders' initiatives targeting out-of-school youth, and identifying critical needs and leverage points for providing employment and entrepreneurial training and support to this population, the assessment presents USAID with strategic recommendations that could inform future programming.<sup>3</sup>

### *Assessment Objectives*

The following main assessment objectives were developed by USAID/Benin and EDC:

**Objective 1--Present an overview of the profile of out-of-school youth in Benin:** Identify who the out-of-school youth are, establish why they drop out-of-school, and for those who are currently working, describe what kind of employment they have.

**Objective 2--Provide a profile of existing youth-serving organizations (public or private) in Benin:** Identify the key players providing services to youth populations and determine the range and depth of existing projects/initiatives focusing on the broader realm of youth development, workforce development, and non-formal education.

**Objective 3—Identify employment training options:** Provide an overview of employment training options that are available to out-of-school youth in Benin, including types of vocational or technical training available within the public secondary education system, informal work-related apprenticeships available, as well as other job training options; determine the role of the private sector within these formal and informal training programs.

**Objective 4--Provide an overview of alternative basic education/non-formal education offerings for out-of-school youth:** Describe the situation of fundamental education skills (reading and writing) in Benin and identify current alternative basic education systems and/or offerings available to those who are out-of-school (e.g., literacy training).

**Objective 5—Outline Government of Benin and donor gaps in training needs of the youth population:** Create an analytical snapshot of the existing policies and institutional capacities (strengths, weaknesses, gaps) in public and private institutions providing basic education, training and employment services to Beninese youth; identify donors' interests and emphases regarding technical and vocational training and other programming targeting out-of-school youth populations.

**Objective 6— Conduct a labor market analysis:** Conduct a labor-market analysis and select value-chain analyses profiling Beninese formal and informal labor market demands and trends in selected geographic regions and economic sectors; and recommend promising economic sectors as well as potential value chain linkages.

<sup>3</sup> Projects or NGOs funded by the European Commission, Cooperation Suisse, UNICEF, Helvetas, GIZ, DANIDA, ILO, and USAID were visited. Donor reports on the situation of out of school youth in Benin from Cooperation Suisse, UNICEF, GIZ and USAID were reviewed.

## II. ASSESSMENT DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### II.1 Assessment Team

The assessment team consisted of a core team of twelve people, comprised of five technical leads which included three expatriates and two Beninese consultants, a youth research/logistics coordinator, three youth assessors, and three translators (English/French and local language).

#### Team Members

1. Ms. Nancy Taggart, Team Leader & Youth Development Specialist\*
2. Mr. Chris Murray, Livelihoods and Informal Economy Specialist\*
3. Mr. Evans Jadotte, Labor Market Specialist\*
4. Mr. Dissou Zomahoun, Employment Training Specialist (Swiss Contact) \*
5. Mr. Latifou Yessoufou, Local Non-formal Education Specialist\*
6. Ms. Adwoa Atta-Krah, Youth Research and Logistics Coordinator
7. Mrs. Martine de Souza, English/French Translator
8. Mrs. Zenabou Bah L'Imam, Focus Group Facilitator, Local Language Translator
9. Mr. Achile Ditchoni, Focus Group Facilitator, Local Language Translator
10. Ms. Latifatou Biga, Youth Assessor
11. Mr. Boris Houenou, Youth Assessor
12. Mr. Rene Aderomou, Youth Assessor

*\*denotes technical lead*



## **II.2. Principles**

This section describes the main principles for the configuration of the team and roles and responsibilities of the assessment team members:

- 1. Dual roles** –In order to ensure that the assessment had technical depth while also promoting integration across sectors and avoiding a natural tendency for sector-specialists to isolate their work into ‘sector silos,’ some technical specialists contributed expertise in more than one technical area. This dual role ensured that the team, in its totality, covered all sectors required for the assessment (e.g., employment training, livelihoods, informal and formal sector labor market, non-formal education) as well as critical cross-sectoral considerations, such as gender.
- 2. International & local complementary expertise** –In order to conduct numerous meetings with different stakeholders while ensuring coverage across the different regions during the field visits, the team divided up into two groups. These mini teams not only ensured that there were the appropriate technical leads present on each side, but also created a balance between international staff and local experts who provided extensive local knowledge of the Benin environment.
- 3. Develop a close working relationship with USAID/Benin.** The assessment team benefited from USAID Benin’s extensive knowledge and understanding of context-specific sectoral issues, challenges, and opportunities. The team worked closely with USAID/ Benin’s office of education on the assessment.
- 4. Build on proven models.** While assessing constraints, key problems, and issues facing youth, the team focused on identifying, describing, and understanding successful and potentially successful strategies and models to enhance youth education, skills training, livelihoods promotion, and employment opportunities in Benin.
- 5. Listen to the voices of youth.** Youth experiences are best presented by the youth themselves; youth transformation is at the heart of the social change needed. Listening to youth’s voices and youth’s views within the context of overall political, social, cultural, and economic dynamics is critical to assessing how best to shape a strategy. The team included three Beninese youth, emphasized fieldwork directly with youth, and prioritized youth input.
- 6. Understand the role of the Beninese government.** Recognizing that government goodwill and cooperation are necessary for successful programming, and particularly for a policy environment conducive to youth transformation, the team communicated with, and solicited input from, government offices (at all levels--national, regional, local) involved in youth development policy and programs.
- 7. Prioritize access to services by both girls and boys (gender equity).** The team explored options for both males and females.

## **II.3 Process**

The overall assessment took place over a period of six consecutive weeks (July 25 through September 3, 2011) while the field work was undertaken over a three-week period (August 1 to August 19, 2011),

culminating with a stakeholder presentation of preliminary findings and potential areas of opportunities at USAID Benin on August 18<sup>th</sup> 2011.

- **Week 1:** Assessment preparation work was done in the US prior to travel.
- **Week 2:** the team finalized the testing of tools and protocols that would be used during interviews, and carried out numerous meetings, interviews and site visits with USAID, relevant Ministries, NGO's, donors and youth-serving institutions. (See Annex 1 for a complete list of key informants interviewed/ sites visited). Representation from the technical areas, youth assessors and translators participated in initial key stakeholder meetings where it was essential for a larger team to obtain foundational information; for example, USAID, key ministries and some select youth-serving organizations.

To facilitate the consolidation of meeting notes, team members used a common “Institutional Profile” template for writing up key points and findings from their meetings, which were then synthesized and compiled to inform the final report.

- **Week 3:** the team was divided into two sub-teams for the site visits, focus group discussions and interviews. The sub-teams comprised of 4- 5 members: 2-3 technical leads, 1-2 local youth assessors, and 1-2 local language translators.

Team	Towns visited
1	Parakou-- Djougou—Natitingou—Tangueita—Abomey/Bohicon—Cotonou
2	Parakou--Kandi—Dassa---Abomey/Bohicon—Cotonou

To the extent possible, debriefing sessions were held in the evenings to ensure that information gathered was shared amongst everyone. At the end of Week 3, the full team participated in a joint debriefing session where lessons learned, key challenges and potential areas of opportunity were discussed.



**Focus Groups were held at:**

- Tanguiéta
- Kabolé (Glazoué)
- Alohoun-Kodota (Zakpota)
- Bougnankou (Pèrèrè)
- Djougou
- Porto-Novo
- Mongo (Kandi)
- Bantansouè (Gogounou)
- Tohouekanme (Akpro-Missérété)

**Key**

★ = cities visited by both groups



- **WEEK 4:** consisted not only of final interviews, focus group meetings and follow-up site visits in the Cotonou/Porto Novo area, but of data analysis and synthesis in preparation for the stakeholder presentation held at USAID on Thursday, August 18, 2011.
- **WEEK 5-6:** The team completed data analysis and incorporated suggestions received during the stakeholder presentation then finalized the report methodology.

The team's approach to data collection and analysis was shaped by the following methodologies:

- Using a structured, qualitative approach for interviews and focus groups
- Drawing on documentation for quantitative data
- Using experiences gathered during one stage to improve later stages so that learning informs the process
- Shifting from analysis of challenges and formulating strategy options for moving forward

Primary assessment methods included:

**Document Review:** The team reviewed youth-related studies, economic analyses, labor market studies, relevant Government of Benin (GoB) policies, legislation, strategies, plans, as well as youth-serving organization program descriptions, reports and evaluations. To provide a comparative perspective of neighboring countries with similar economic and social/political conditions in Benin, the team also reviewed selected documentation on youth and workforce development programs and policies in neighboring countries.



**Field Research:** The team collected qualitative and quantitative data, and built upon existing instruments developed by EQUIP3 used for previous youth assessments. These instruments were adapted to the local context through a consultative process with Beninese team members. To ensure effective completion within the stipulated time, the assessment team divided into sub-teams when appropriate to conduct field investigations. The data collection methodologies included the following:



**Site Visits to Youth-Serving Programs:** The team conducted site visits to youth-serving programs in the fields of training, education and youth development, currently being implemented by public and private players in Benin. They conducted interviews with staff and stakeholders and observed and learned promising practices, particular challenges, and priority needs for youth support and programming.

**Key Informant Interviews:** The team conducted interviews to discuss various aspects of youth services and needs with youth and with key

informants from the following types of institutions: government officials from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Secondary Education and Technical and Professional Training, the Ministry of Microfinance and Employment of Youth and Women, and, at the national, provincial, and district levels; non-governmental actors including international development agencies with youth programs; representatives of national, regional, and local NGOs; representatives of private-sector institutions; representatives of youth-serving organizations and associations at national and local levels; representatives of trade associations, labor unions, and/or other employment-related institutions; and representatives of both formal and non-formal technical and vocational training institutions.



**Focus Group Discussions:** Participatory youth focus group methodologies were used to collect direct, firsthand information from youth. Separate focus groups were held for boys and girls, and to the extent possible, youth were identified and selected purposely to maintain representation in terms of age. A protocol for conducting the focus groups was developed, drawing on EQUIP3 experience and team members' expertise.

**Data Analysis and Preparation of Assessment Report:** The team analyzed data at end of the collective work in the field. The team shared key initial findings with USAID and stakeholders and then, based on feedback and discussion, prepared an assessment report to USAID, providing the

rationale, based on data analysis and key findings, for recommended youth programming strategy options.

Using the different methodologies described above, the team sequenced interviews, stakeholder meetings and focus groups with key informants based on their roles and their influence on the assessment questions.

## **II.4 Study Limitations**

While the assessment team did have access to many individuals, organizations and target youth cohorts for gathering data, limitations to the research included:

- Limited time: the assessment team developed an ambitious schedule in order to attempt to get an understanding of the diverse needs and profiles of youth in different regions and localities in Benin. However, limited time made it difficult to visit all regions of the country. In keeping with what had been proposed, the regions of Mono, Couffo, and Plateau were not visited.
- Scheduling conflicts of key donors and stakeholders made it difficult to organize a donor roundtable as envisioned in the assessment proposal, so individual meetings with donors were held.
- Unavailability of updated household data from the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Analysis (INSAE).
- Due to the assessment taking place during the month of August when many institutions are closed for holiday break, some training institutions and key informants were not able to be visited or interviews.

### III. FINDINGS: THE SITUATION OF YOUTH EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT IN BENIN

#### III.1 Profiles of Beninese Youth

The African Youth Charter defines youth as age 15-35 and within this broad age range, young people face diverse challenges. Unemployment and underemployment plague older youth who have completed secondary education and even have tertiary level degrees, but lack relevant skills and training for the job market. DHS data from 2006 estimates that out-of-school youth age 15-25 form 60.82% of the overall youth population at this age. According to a study by UNICEF in 2006, there are approximately 700,000 out-of-school youth between the ages of 10-17 who have never been to school or dropped out prior to completing primary education, equal to 46% of the total population of children at this age.<sup>4</sup> This report will focus on examining the needs and opportunities of this cohort of out-of-school youth, and specifically, the unique challenges and needs of two cohorts of out-of-school youth: youth age 15-25 and youth age 10-14. Partner organizations and donors working in Benin highlight the particularly vulnerable position of out-of-school children and youth age 10-14. Some of these youth have never been to formal school, others only for only a few years, and all are beyond the maximum age (10 years) to enter the formal school system. At the same time, these same youth are too young to enter vocational training programs that are available to youth age 14 and higher that could equip them with more skills and access to income-generation activities. As a result, in many ways, these youth are particularly excluded from most programs that could help them gain needed skills to assist them in participating in their communities and the workplace in a positive way.

#### Education

While significant investment over the past several years increased access to primary education, specifically targeting girls, resulting in increased enrollment rates, young people continue to drop out-of-school throughout the system and many prior to completing primary school. According to Ministry of Maternal and Primary Education data from 2009-2010, the primary completion rate was only 64%, with an annual dropout rate of 10.72%.<sup>5</sup> As stated earlier, 46% of out-of-school youth in Benin either never attended school or dropped out prior to completing primary education or receiving their CEP.

Not surprisingly, as a result, out-of-school youth lack basic skills and competencies to help them to pursue income-generation opportunities, return to formal school or enroll in training. Literacy rates among youth are around 60% across the country, but in rural areas are lower at around 48%, with the lowest levels in Alibori and Attacora regions, with 21.7% and 37.4%, respectively. The national literacy rate of female youth is only 42%.<sup>6</sup> Tables 1 and 2 present literacy information by residence and gender.

<sup>4</sup> "Out-of-school youth" is defined here as children who either did not complete primary school or those who did not receive the CEP to those who have never been to school.

<sup>5</sup> The World Bank. (2011). EdStats: Household survey education profiles.

<sup>6</sup> UNICEF. (March, 2010). Statistics: Benin.



**Table 1: Literacy rate by area of residence (in %)**

	Youth (15-24 years)	Adults (15 years +)	Youth literacy parity index (female/male)
<b>Benin</b>	60.5	39.5	70.0
<b>Urban</b>	76.7	59.6	80.0
<b>Rural</b>	48.6	26.5	60.0

Source: Socioeconomic indicators INSAE (EMICoV, 2007).

**Table 2: Youth Literacy Rates by Gender (in %)**

Education	%
Youth (15-24 years) literacy rate, 2004-2008*, male	64
Youth (15-24 years) literacy rate, 2004-2008*, female	42

[http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/benin\\_statistics.html#83](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/benin_statistics.html#83)

Reasons for the significant school dropout rates are directly linked to poverty and social-cultural norms. Throughout all of the regions where this study conducted focus group discussions (FGDs), youth as well as parents, most often cited a lack of financial means by their families as one of the main reasons for having left school. And yet, parents may choose to devote funds to pay for cultural events, suggesting that education is not considered as strong of a cultural priority.

While primary education is free and compulsory in Benin, other related costs such as school materials appear to still be too much for many families to bear, especially when parents have several children of school-going age. Given that secondary school is not free, youth often drop out prior to transitioning to the secondary level. Another related reason for the high dropout rate, cited by youth and community members alike, was the fact that children had failed their school exams several times, causing their parents to become frustrated and they no longer saw the value of supporting them financially to stay in school.

*“...I stopped going to school because my parents didn’t have any money. I’m sorry because I see I am losing out.” **Female participant, Kandi FGD***

*“We all try to send our children to school but often we run out of money to pay.” **Mother-FGD Kaboley***

In addition to parents’ lack of means, or lack of desire to pay for youth’s schooling, youth are pulled out of school because their parents do not perceive school as a priority investment for the limited funds they have. Parents’ vision for their sons and daughters varied: In discussions with parents and other community members, adults often expressed more interest in boys continuing their education or returning to schooling than girls. The economic reality in which parents depend largely on children to assist either with household work, cultivating family farms, or helping to sell produce or items in the market, is such that parents perceive school as something that takes their children away from more

valuable family income-generating activities. Particularly, girls are affected adversely by this situation because of the central role they play in most of the families' housework. In interviews with NGO, GRADH (a local NGO which implements alternative education programs for market children in Parakou), GRADH's Program Coordinator emphasized the challenges they face in convincing program beneficiaries to focus on their supplemental academic studies. Because the families of these market children seldom support them to study, but instead, pressure them to work during the day, children attempt to participate in the program, overburdened by family tasks that await them at home. This is predominantly a challenge for girls who are expected to do most of the work at home, but also in the market stalls. As one young girl explained during a focus group meeting in Alohoun-Kodota, "...there is no way I could go to school- all girls here help their mothers at home. If I go, no one will help my mother at home."

*"The reason why so many of us young girls drop out-of-school is because our parents take us out to get married. This way, we cannot finish school and many cannot even finish learning a métier."*  
**Female participant,  
Natitingou FGD**

The impact of economic pressures on families, communities, and young people's schooling also manifests in families sending their children to work elsewhere, migration of youth to look for work, and trafficking of children. These options are seen by families as a way of alleviating the burden of having to support the children themselves. Trafficking of youth, particularly girls, by their families to work in other regions of the country to earn money for the family is a phenomenon particularly in certain regions of the country, including Donga. Youth leaving their communities to find work in Nigeria or Togo is very prevalent, particularly along the Benin-Togo/Benin-Nigeria borders, such as near Porto Novo and other areas as well. Against this backdrop of poverty, religious and cultural norms coupled with financial constraints can often support harmful practices impacting female and male youth. In some communities, marrying daughters off early is seen as a way of alleviating the burden of having to cover their needs. The percentage of child marriage in Benin is 34% overall and 47% in rural areas (19% urban areas).<sup>7</sup> Peuhl girls participating in a FGD in Bantansoue had all married early without being given a choice. They expressed a desire to do something besides working in the fields, but stated they did not know what other opportunities existed.

Men in community meetings in Djougou said that according to the Coran, it was an obligation for parents to provide for their daughters, and that marrying them off, even at an early age, was a way to ensure that their daughters were taken care of. Not ensuring this would mean that "they would not receive God's blessings." In other predominantly Muslim communities, including Djougou and Malanville, parents send their boys and sometimes girls to Koranic schools to be educated, instead of regular schools. At these Koranic schools, children are given religious and moral instruction. Due to the fact that children are not fed at the schools, youth often have to fend for themselves and end up begging or stealing for food. The "talibes" as the youth are called, are adrift from their families and from school so have minimal structure or support for their basic needs.

<sup>7</sup> UNICEF. (March, 2010). Statistics: Benin. UNICEF defines early marriage as marriage under the age of 18.

## Training & Work

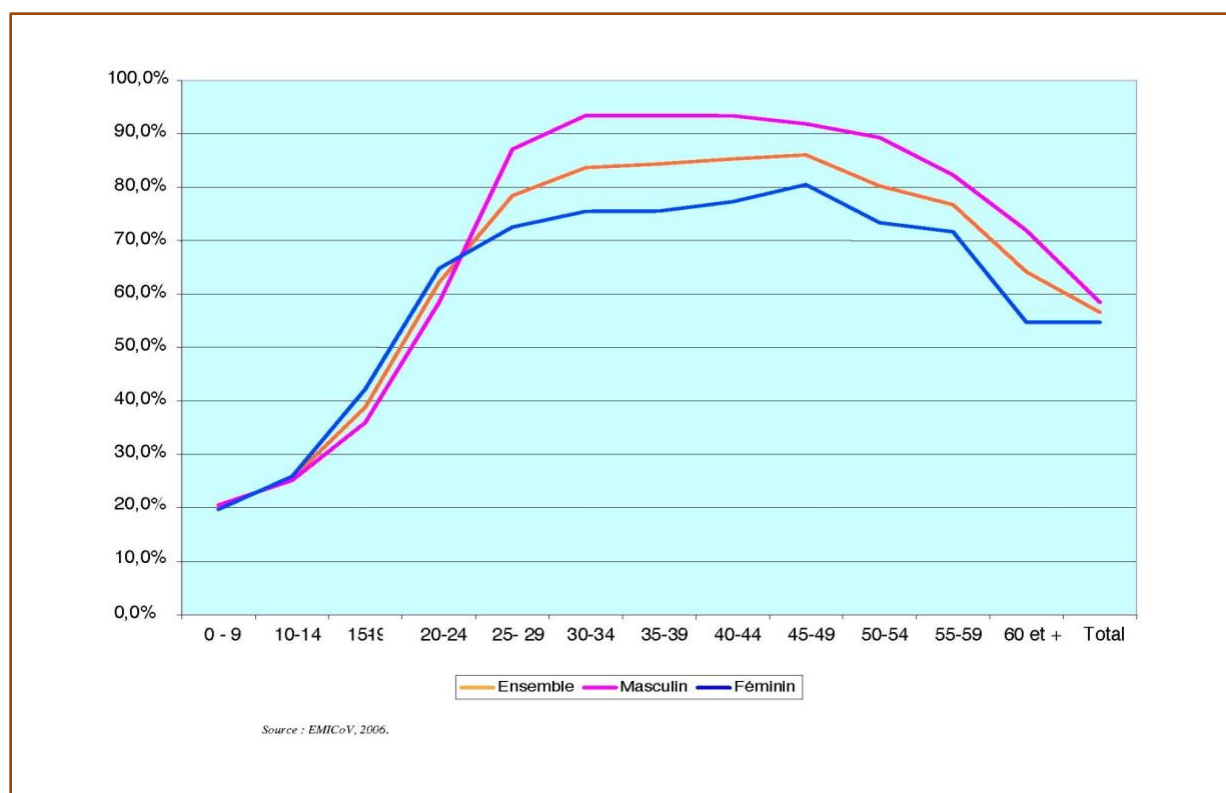
---

As the finding above illustrate, youth in Benin, particularly girls, enter the workforce at an early age. 60% of heads of households are female and 39% are under the age of 26 years old.

**Table 3: Labor force participation (10 years +) by department and gender (in %)**

	2006			2007		
	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
Alibori	61.7	49.7	72.8	58.4	50.6	58.9
Atacora	70.6	65.9	75.5	55.1	53.0	55.4
Atlantique	60.3	57.0	63.7	51.1	45.2	52.6
Borgou	64.0	58.9	69.0	57.6	42.4	59.0
Collines	74.0	74.4	73.6	54.0	45.6	56.7
Couffo	58.6	61.1	55.7	49.9	46.3	50.6
Donga	57.2	49.9	64.3	42.9	37.9	43.3
Littoral	54.0	51.1	57.0	51.7	48.6	52.8
Mono	62.0	63.0	60.9	49.0	37.8	52.4
Ouémé	64.6	65.5	63.6	53.5	49.5	54.4
Plateau	65.0	63.0	67.3	56.5	50.2	57.6
Zou	66.5	65.2	68.0	53.1	44.3	55.9

Figure 1: Rate of Workforce Activity by Sex and Age (2006)



ILO Working Document on Employment No. 66, "Job market Institutions facing development Challenges: The Case of Benin." 2010.

Older out-of-school youth consistently articulate the necessity of making money to support themselves as well as their parents. This reality shapes their decisions and their visions for the future. Once out of formal school, youth gravitate toward trades and trainings that either offer perceived rapid opportunities for making money, or that are already familiar to them. When asked the rationale for selecting respective métiers or trainings, youth often explained that they got involved because either a parent or family member was already involved in that field. Additionally, youth almost always aspired to join a métier that was visible and popular in their community, which further highlights the importance of exposure.

In FGDs, when asked what kind of work youth wanted to do, male and female youth for the most part mentioned the same types of trades and trainings: hairdressing or sewing for women, and motor-bike mechanics, taxi-moto or construction, for men. It is evident that youth lack exposure to creative jobs or income-generating ideas. Additionally, youth lack role models of young people working in less traditional professions/trades, young men and women lack information about opportunities for training and education. Consequently, comparatively few youth said they wanted to be doctors or nurses; their knowledge about opportunities for work and earning money is based on what they know and see from among family members and within their communities.

Young women in Djougou expressed preference for work that could earn them money, but was not tedious or difficult. When asked about specific types of work, such as processing shea butter or cassava (gari-making) or working in a factory, female youth either said they were not interested in certain work because of poor working conditions or because it was too difficult. Although many youth articulated their desire for training or different income-generating opportunities, they did not know what options existed or how they could pursue these, further confirming the lack of access to information and opportunities. At the same time, youth consistently cite financial constraints as the reason for why they cannot get an apprenticeship or access training.

*"I also want to be a hairdresser. Choosing a métier like sewing or hairdressing is much better because selling in the market will not get me enough money to save and prepare for marriage."*

**-Female participant, FGD Natitingou**

*"I chose this métier because this is what I see the older ones doing, they earn quite a lot of money and they even own a lot of materials."* **-Male participant, FGD Akpro-Misserete**

*"If there were any sewing or hairdressing centers for us to work in, after our apprenticeship, that would help a lot. We don't have anything like that here."* **-Female participant, FGD Djougou**

*"Everyone at home is in the gari making business and I wanted to do something different. There is a lot of smoke and it is hard. Processing gari wouldn't give me enough money to help me achieve my goals."* **-Female participant, FGD Djougou**

*"...We want a training center for the girls to teach food processing, hairdressing, animal husbandry. We have less access to land in our area; farms are reducing, so we need other incomes. The land is not good anymore."* **Mother, Kaboley FGD**

*"I once went to a gold mine, but when I saw how hard the work was, I decided to stick to sewing."* **Female participant, FGD Djougou**

For the fortunate youth who are able to obtain the funds to apprentice in a trade, the usual next step after their apprenticeship is to start their own workshop or business. However, youth again are constrained by a lack of finances to pay for equipment or materials to start a business. Despite this challenge, youth rarely consider joining together to form cooperatives, each contributing their own resources. Youth and adults alike attribute this to a general lack of trust in the Beninese culture which prevents young people from wanting to collaborate with their peers to pool resources to collectively start a business

Young boys in the rural villages are also extensively involved in the lands. Most are involved in crop production or herding livestock, sorghum, cotton, corn, yams, goats and cattle. In cases where the family small holding is large enough, they might produce surplus which is then sold in the local markets. This exposes the boys to some trade opportunities and gives them a slightly broader view of life and opportunity. During harvest season, boys have a seasonal obligation to be in the village, and specifically, working on the land. During other periods, some earn money working on neighbor's plots, while others head for the big towns to try to earn fast money. This includes going to Nigeria, where they work as laborers. It is said that after a few months' work, some boys return with enough capital to purchase a motorbike which can then be used to generate an additional income ('zemidjan' services).

Some girls in the villages have the chance to learn skills through apprenticeships in weaving, tailoring, pottery or craft making. The opportunity to earn an income from these trades in the impoverished local economy is rather small, but does bring some income to the family. The boys learn other skills such as carpentry, tailoring, bricklaying/masonry, and welding. These boys manage to earn an income in the villages and the surrounding communities, but this usually tends to be an incidental process, as opposed to being the result of a structured business.

## Priorities & Interests

Through discussions with youth in focus groups, young women and men expressed hope and ambition, when asked about their hopes for the future. That said, this vision not only varied considerably between male and female youth, but also between more rural and peri-urban areas. In most areas where this assessment organized FGDs, female and male out-of-school youth expressed interest in returning to either school or to vocational training. For those currently in schools, they wanted to continue on. Most notably in Porto Novo, male youth expressed a desire to return to formal schooling, even those who were working as an apprentice or participating in vocational training. Similarly, some girls, especially those who had previously attended school, expressed interest in returning to school. As one 18-year old participant from Allohoun-Kodota (in the commune of Zakpota) explained, “...my parents sent me to school when I was young, but I would run away all the time. I didn’t know that it was important. Today, I understand that school is very important and I try to tell the young girls to go. If I could, I would go again.”

*“...We have no freedom when we are not able to choose what we want to do. Other girls work in other areas like crafts or selling on the roadside, they have freedom to choose to do what they like to earn money.”*

**Female participant, Bantansoue FGD**

This suggests that youth may place greater value on formal education than vocational training. In other peri-urban and urban areas in the North, youth’s ambitions were more modest but they expressed interest in “being the patron” or “working in a workshop.” In rural areas, many boys spoke of their goal to get married. On the contrary, young women expressed frustration and pessimism particularly in discussions in rural communities near Kandi.

*“I want to be a manager of an atelier in the future.”*

*“My dream is to be a sewing patron.”*

**Female participants, FGD Djougou**

*“I want to be able to sell more things so I can save money, expand and open up my own shop”* **Female participant, FGD Natitingou**

Another gender difference within respondents in FGDs was boys’ goal of making money more so than the young women. Girls in rural areas also expressed interest in programs that enable them to continue their education in the context of their lives within the culture and norms of their village lives. While many indicated that they would love to break free of the trapped lives they found themselves in, they recognize that it is not really possible. Thus, they were interested in programs that provided them with an opportunity to earn a living in the community by doing something different in addition to the farming and household responsibilities they had. Earning some money for themselves would give them some freedom.

When asking youth what type of activities would help respond to the challenges they experience, youth in several different towns mentioned the idea of a ‘service center’ that would be created where they could work and earn money like a business but which they would not have to pay for start up or equipment.

### III.2 Profile of Youth-Serving Organizations

While there are numerous youth-serving organizations (YSOs) in Benin, this assessment looked at those organizations working primarily in the area of vocational and alternative education programs for out-of-school youth. Therefore, the many organizations focused on other sectors, such as HIV/AIDS, nutrition, or economic growth were not included. The matrix below presents the list of youth serving organizations interviewed and visited with a summary of their scope and the types of program outcomes.

**Table 4: Youth Serving Organizations Interviewed and Visited**

Name of Organization	Program Scope	Reported Program Outcomes
<b>Aide et Action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative education training center offering agriculture, craft skills, literacy, micro-credit and entrepreneurship training</li> <li>• Main focus is disadvantaged youth of age 15-25</li> <li>• Program model built around equipping community members to run and participate in development of training program and centers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community engagement and enhanced program sustainability through community and local government support</li> <li>• Qualifying youth for CQP or CPM tests</li> <li>• Youth are positioned to work or start their own businesses</li> </ul>
<b>Bureau d'Appui aux Artisans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides business support services to artisan groups to expand into new sectors;</li> <li>• Supports experimental CQM curriculum development</li> <li>• Pioneered support to the CQP system in collaboration with Swiss Contact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small business expansion to new sectors</li> <li>• Continued training for existing businesses</li> <li>• Access to credit for artisans</li> </ul>
<b>CAMPF (Centre d'arts et de métiers pour la femme)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential program for 40 out-of-school and uneducated women</li> <li>• 18-month training in campus on agricultural techniques</li> <li>• Receives funding support from the local mayor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reintegration of girls back into society, in their own village or a new environment</li> <li>• Girls provided with skills and credit to start businesses that allow them to support themselves and earn some money</li> </ul>
<b>Centre Ruth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential program for girls from abusive or forced marriages (about 30 girls per year)</li> <li>• Three-year program that teaches practical skills such as sewing, weaving, soap making, cooking and housekeeping, fundamental French, vegetable gardening, animal breeding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reintegration of girls back into society, in their own village or a new environment</li> <li>• Girls provided with skills to grow food for themselves and earn some money, to be self sufficient</li> </ul>
<b>Centre Songhai</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create viable socio-economic environments for training, production, research and development of sustainable agricultural practices</li> <li>• Seeks to train young agricultural entrepreneurs to run a self-sufficient farm that produces food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-sufficient agricultural activities that produced food or produce in sufficient quantity for surplus to generate income</li> </ul>
<b>DERANA (means "Solidarity Group")</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides French literacy training for farmers on small holdings so that they can communicate with customers in the towns</li> <li>• Integrates numeracy, literacy, social science and biology</li> <li>• They have recently begun post literacy technical skills training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased skills among farmers</li> <li>• The technical skills enable farmers to expand their farming with new business opportunities</li> </ul>



Name of Organization	Program Scope	Reported Program Outcomes
<b>GRADH</b> (Group for Research and Action in Human Development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targets youth excluded from schooling because they are trapped in abusive working environments (youth from markets, “talibe” youth, in informal apprenticeships, working for employers who refuse them access schooling) and negotiates informal schooling opportunities</li> <li>• Works with parents to place youth back into formal schools, where possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth reintegrated into formal school system</li> <li>• Youth receiving schooling outside of normal school hours</li> </ul>
<b>Lions – Cotonou</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A youth training program for youth on leadership and civic involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post training one-on-one mentoring for a year</li> <li>• Mentor provides consistent guidance</li> </ul>
<b>ONG SIANSON-</b> (For a better tomorrow)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Offers two years of local language literacy for out-of-school youth followed by two years of French</li> <li>○ Youth taught practical craft skills such as hairdressing, mechanics</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Microfinance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Offers loans and community development support to young women that are guaranteed through group support from other recipients</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Position youth for the CEP after four years</li> <li>• Youth are prepared to enter further craft skills training</li> <li>• Strong community participation in choosing the local language and skills set</li> <li>• Women mostly in the agricultural sector receive group loans to expand their business operations</li> </ul>
<b>PIED</b> (Programme d'Insertion des Enfants déshérités)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative education program for vulnerable out-of-school youth and orphans</li> <li>• Prepares youth to sit for the CEP</li> <li>• Works with Koranic leaders to allow “talibe” boys to participate in informal schooling programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth reintegrated in the formal school system;</li> <li>• “Talibe” youth provided with schooling and opportunity to support themselves through means beyond begging</li> </ul>
<b>SNV-Benin</b> - Netherlands Development Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shifting to become an International NGO</li> <li>• Initiating a HITT program to increase access for disadvantaged people (in particular women, youth, under skilled and semi-skilled) to market-oriented vocational training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program not yet commenced but aims to expand access for youth into informal work in tourism</li> </ul>
<b>Swiss Contact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International NGO</li> <li>• Contributed to the creation of a structured and officially recognized system for vocational training and continuing education</li> <li>• Supports advisory and career placement services for graduates who are looking for jobs and those who would like to become self-employed</li> <li>• Supports business development skills training for graduates to access funding and start their own business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocational training programs developed for 12 different technical skills crafts</li> <li>• Youth receive businesses skills training enabling them to start their own businesses</li> <li>• Youth linked to financing to start a business</li> </ul>

## Opportunities



Many of the YSOs visited and interviewed are implementing pilot initiatives that allow them to use more innovative approaches, adapted to the changing needs and circumstances of the young people with whom they work. Many of the YSOs work with youth who are otherwise not being reached--the most vulnerable minority groups—"talibes," market children, street children, trafficked girls, Peuhl communities, and fisher villages. The services offered respond to basic needs of the targeted youth to bridge "soft skills" and literacy and numeracy, and technical training for specific trades in order to help them link to apprenticeships or income-generation employment.

From discussions and site visits, the programs implemented appear to be having success providing needed services and support, suggesting that if taken to scale, they have the potential for greater impact and reaching many more youth. In addition, program managers attested that their resources were fewer than the demand within communities for their support. The assessment team was not able to assess the level of training of the YSO staff or the quality of instruction because classes were not observed in action.

## **Gaps**

---

Many YSOs have small programs and small budgets with a lack of longer-term vision which limits their ability to scale the programs and reach more youth, particularly in alternative education. Presumably due to limited resources, they tend to focus on their local communities or selected targeted departments or communes. It was not clear how much coordination there was among the different programs with regard to working together or sharing best practice.

As the YSOs were testing interventions through their pilot programs, they identified shortfalls in their program design that hindered the project from providing sufficient support to youth, such as not including food assistance as part of the package of services offered to the talibe youth.

In addition, programs offered by YSOs do not offer integrated programs that include social development or cultural activities such as civic rights education, creative crafts, music, or dance. This is particularly apparent in the rural villages where the only opportunities appear to be seasonal soccer that is played in open spaces. Many girls in the focus groups expressed an interest and need for health education programs and services, civic rights education as well as parent sensitization and awareness programs. Many girls indicated that they would love to be trained to run such programs in their own communities for their peers. While there are municipal youth halls in some of the larger towns (Kandi, Bohicon, Pakanou) that offer occasional educational or recreational programs, these are not youth centers in the traditional sense as there are no youth leaders or youth groups that regularly meet in the facilities. They are not focal points that attract youth through fun activities and programs and then would be able to channel youth into social development, civic awareness or health education programs. If a youth center was fully functional, it could even offer career guidance and access to further vocational training. In a village outside Kandi, the boys explained that the only youth space they had was the soccer field. When asked, they said they would like more youth activities.

Finally, there is a dearth of actual youth-led organizations in Benin. This may be indicative of the nascent state of civil society in Benin, as a result of the country's past communist political state in which civil society organizations were illegal. In addition, the youth-led youth associations that do exist in Benin

tend to have a political focus rather than a cultural and social one. Those that are non-political tend to be run by adults rather than by youth themselves. In fact, YSOs appeared to take a more adult-led approach to their service delivery without giving opportunities to the youth themselves to participate in program design or implementation beyond being recipients of services. Youth-led models for youth programming are becoming quite common in developing countries and in the U.S. and hold great potential for empowering youth. Youth in focus groups expressed great interest in such programs. Program models include the EQUIP3 Ruwwad Project in the West Bank, EQUIP3 Garissa-Youth Project in Kenya, and USAID/Kenya's "Yes Youth Can" Initiative in Kenya.

### **III.3 Profile of the Informal and Formal Economy and Employment as Relevant to Youth**

This section discusses employment opportunities relevant to youth within the informal and formal sectors. The report attempts to separate out the discussion of informal and formal opportunities in separate sections, however the two classifications are not always clearly distinct so there are some job opportunities which could be categorized in either formal and informal sectors.

#### **Informal Economy**

---

Approximately 95% of the Beninese workforce depends on the informal economy for their livelihoods (60.5% in 1992, 70.2% in 2002).<sup>8</sup> This reflects an ever-increasing shift to the informal sector, which accounts for 70% of Benin's GDP.<sup>9</sup> Youth form a significant part of this sector. Lack of economic opportunities in rural areas forces many young people to migrate to neighboring countries, such as Nigeria and Togo, in search of improved opportunities and living conditions.

Generally, in Benin and in most developing countries, women and female youth's economic participation is concentrated in the informal sector. An excerpt from a DANIDA publication on women's private sector participation summarizes many of the obstacles women face in participating in the formal economy in Benin:

*"Obstacles to women's access to economic opportunities cut across private and public institutions, policies and the regulatory environment of business and the labor market. Mechanisms disfavoring women's participation are deep-rooted in private sector institutions like banks, finance institutions, business organizations, and trade unions. In addition to low levels of literacy and asset ownership poor women face prevailing notions of what is acceptable women's work. Further- more, entry into formal sector employment on fair conditions tends to be impeded by labor market regulations and women's disadvantages in vocational and technical education. Both poor and well-off women entrepreneurs often lack networks to support them in their business ventures."*<sup>10</sup>

#### **Opportunities**

---

A major sector that attracts a large number of out-of-school youth, including female and male youth, is

---

<sup>8</sup> African Economic Outlook. (2011). *Country notes: Benin 2011*; Walther, R. (June, 2006). *Vocational training in the informal sector: Report on the Benin field survey*.

<sup>9</sup> African Economic Outlook. (2011). *Country notes: Benin 2011*.

<sup>10</sup> DANIDA. (2008). *Gender Equality in the Private Sector*.

the handicraft sector. This is probably due to the relative ease of entry among youth, because a low education level is required to enter this job market. The handicraft sector comprises approximately 12% of Benin's GDP.<sup>11</sup> Youth find apprenticeships with patrons in workshops of various trades. In the traditional apprenticeship system, apprentices work three to four years with an atelier to learn the trade. The income earned by youth in apprenticeships is minimal. It is up to the goodwill of the masters (patrons) to give them 'something small' each day, reported to be about 500 CFA.<sup>12</sup> Following the three years, the apprentice usually seeks to start his/her own workshop but is often constrained by lack of finances to purchase equipment and pay for other start up costs. (*For a more detailed discussion of the apprentice system in Benin see Section III.4 "Profile of Technical and Vocational Training Offerings for Youth"*) Within the handicraft sector, young women are mostly active in traditionally female-oriented trades such as hair styling and tailoring. A graduate who has received her vocational degree, "Certificate de Qualification Professionnelle" or (CQP) who starts her own hair salon can earn roughly 100,000 CFA per month in the Cotonou and Parakou areas after about two years operating her own shop.

One area of opportunity in the informal economy would be to support the many existing micro-enterprises in the handicraft sector to help them scale up and transition to the status of a small- or medium-size business. As the standard "career" path for youth apprentices following their apprenticeships is to start their own businesses, there is a proliferation of competing micro-enterprises in any given town or community. Business support services to help these micro-enterprises become more competitive and grow would be a valuable addition.

Women are also fairly well represented in the informal food-processing sector. Donor and private sector funding of agro-processing initiatives, such as Centre Songhai, Centre Ruth, and CAMF in the Borgou area has enabled women to get involved in income-generation activities, including beekeeping, shea butter, and fruits and vegetable processing. Beekeeping for example, is a moderately easy-entry income generation activity also due to the minimal training required and low start up costs. In a current donor-supported initiative targeting rural women in the Borgou region, women are offered a ten-day training program and are then encouraged to join the cooperative with a small investment to pay for a bee house, basic equipment and clothing. Average annual earnings for this sector are approximately 200,000 CFA.

The transport sector in Benin is regarded as a crucial sector for the country's economy. Benin is a strategic transit corridor linking the countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) with Nigeria.<sup>13</sup> The port of Cotonou, the main hub for imports and exports, has been operating at twice its designed capacity for many years,<sup>14</sup> but the expansions conducted under the Millennium Challenge Account<sup>15</sup> in 2011 will greatly improve the capacity and reduce cargo handling and truck turnaround time. The volume of overloaded trucks on the limited network of Benin's roads is high and although periodic maintenance is performed, the network is fragile. The OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID)

---

<sup>11</sup> The World Bank. (2008). *Republic of Benin growth strategy for poverty reduction: April 2007*.

<sup>12</sup> According to Article 11 of the policy governing the artisan sector in Benin, after two years of work, apprentices have the right to receive a compensation based on market rates for that trade, however no amount is indicated in the policy and reportedly, it is not well-respected.

<sup>13</sup> Reliefweb. (January, 2011). OFID Supports Transport Sector in Benin.

<sup>14</sup> The World Bank. (2011) Benin's infrastructure: a continental perspective.

<sup>15</sup> Millennium Challenge Account. (2011). Benin.

initiated a US\$11 million public sector loan agreement in January 2011 on the Kandi-Segbana-Nigeria Border Road over a distance of almost 120km. The expectation is that the project will contribute to rural poverty reduction and economic growth in the country, and improve access to an agricultural production area with significant potential.<sup>16</sup> All of this lends itself to opportunity for job enhancement and employment. Youth have indicated that the port provides opportunities for work as cargo handlers to load and offload truck and ships. This is seen as a way to earn fast cash. They go to try their luck because they have few other choices. These are casual jobs with high risk of injury as well as a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS.

At an informal level, the truck transport routes heading to the borders of Benin offer villages and roadside residents trading opportunities. An infrastructure of services exists along the roads, especially and crossroads or near towns. Food, fuel and maintenance services are usually provided by youth or woman. The supply of fuel is a network on its own, with most of the informal supply of fuel through bottles sold on the side of the road allegedly coming (by boat over the waterways) from illegal siphoning from Nigeria, a practice both governments turn a blind eye to.

The 'zemidjan' or motorbike taxi sector draws a large number of youth (both in the urban and rural settings). Youth want to make quick money, and think this is an easy way to do so. It is, however, a difficult sector, with a high health and injury risk. Some of the youth own their own bikes while others drive for an owner.

Typically, the youth respond to new technology, particularly telecommunications, internet and portable phones. Sale of 'top up credits' for the portable phone sector is usually through the informal trade points (shops). Moov has introduced a network of technology support stores, placing them ahead of their competitors MTN and GLO. These are more structured and formal, making use of youth with technical skills as their staff. Supporting the sector are small portable phone repair stores and internet cafés where techno-savvy youth are finding and creating employment. This aspect of the telecommunications sector lends itself to increased youth employment opportunities.

The fishing industry in Benin provides employment for about 15% of the working population, the bulk of it through the fishing communities around the rivers, lakes and lagoons of Benin.<sup>17</sup> This includes fishing as well as fish farming. The men are traditionally the fishermen, wives take produce to market and youth are expected to be part of the process as soon as they leave school.

Other youth are finding casual employment through the undeveloped beach resorts sector in Cotonou. They are beach sweepers, work in the restaurants, and manage the parking areas. At the fisher village on Lake Nokoue, Ganvie' near Cotonou, the tour guides are secondary school students who speak some English and have a bit of knowledge about the lake, fishing industry and the movement of fish from the fisherman (husband) to the fisher seller (wife) who takes it to market. The guides are not paid a fixed fee.

Looking forward, development of the tourism sector holds potential for informal sector jobs accessible to female and male youth. Tourism is another stated priority for the Government of Benin according to its

---

<sup>16</sup> Reliefweb. (January, 2011). OFID Supports Transport Sector in Benin.

<sup>17</sup> Japan International Cooperation Agency. (2011). Activities in Benin.

Poverty Reduction Strategy and, reportedly, the second largest source of foreign exchange (after cotton) for Benin.<sup>18</sup> The informal sector is a major part of the tourism industry, providing jobs and income to a disproportionate share of poor people. Unlike other industries, however, tourism brings the customer to the product, and there is a high degree of interaction between service providers and tourists. Informal jobs in the tourism sector include freelance guides, handicraft sellers, food and beverage stall operators, unregistered taxis, motorbike and boat operators, restaurant wait staff, small-scale accommodation staff, village home stay operators and many more. Thus, tourism has a high potential to contribute to the income and employment of disadvantaged youth, but only if they are equipped with the skills to participate and access the sector.<sup>19</sup> Equally important to note, informal jobs in the tourism sector hold important potential for young women as well as young men. The types of informal jobs mentioned above are sufficiently accessible because they can be located in diverse settings – in rural and urban settings, do not require extensive training, and do not involve hard or tedious work.

## Gaps

While youth working in some of the handicraft trades reportedly can earn relatively substantial salaries as compared with other trades in the informal sector, it is not clear if there is a market for the large number of competing micro-enterprises in the same trade in any given town or village. Swiss Contact has supported the development of some studies for Cotonou, Parakou and Porto Novo, there is a lack of available localized job market data for specific trades for regions beyond these.

Moreover, as stated above, there is a proliferation of competing handicraft micro-enterprises yet few visible programs that are devoted to transitioning these businesses to become medium sized businesses that would generate greater revenues, employ other youth, and take them the business owners a step further beyond subsistence living.

Finally another “gap” observed are the continuing influence of socio-cultural norms that hinder women from pursuing training and work in non-traditional sectors of which there are often more market opportunities.

## Formal Economy

While the share of the Benin formal sector economy and youth’s participation in it is currently minor, there exists formal sector opportunities for youth, therefore understanding the current economic situation and future trends is helpful for assessing how to shape training and employment programming for youth responding to these trends. As discussed in the previous section, the Beninese economy is essentially informal, with more than 95% of the work force employed in this sector. This makes Benin one of the Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries with the highest informality rate of its economy. Table 5 below presents percentage employment by sector and sex.

**Table 5: Sectors of Employment, 2006-2007 (%)**

Institutional sector of	2006	2007	Change
-------------------------	------	------	--------

<sup>18</sup> The World Bank. (2008). Republic of Benin growth strategy for poverty reduction: April 2007.

<sup>19</sup> SNV Netherlands Development Organization. (November, 2011). *HITT proposal narrative*. The Hague, Netherlands: Author.

employment									
	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
Formal private sector	1.09	1.11	1.09	0.17	0.09	0.26	-84.40%	-91.89%	-76.15%
Informal private sector	95.57	96.03	95.49	95.15	97.26	93.1	-0.44%	1.28%	-2.50%
State-owned enterprises	1.12	0.95	1.14	1.03	0.78	1.27	-8.04%	-17.89%	11.40%
Government services	1.86	1.56	1.92	2.94	1.49	4.34	58.06%	-4.49%	126.04%
Civil society organizations	0.36	0.35	0.36	0.71	0.38	1.03	97.22%	8.57%	186.11%

Source: EMICoV 2006 and 2007.

Real GDP growth in Benin for 2011 and 2012 is projected to be at 3.7% and 5.8% respectively. Given the growth-employment elasticity in Benin, an approximately 7% GDP growth would be necessary in the coming years to create quality employment, particularly in the formal sector. Employment creation prospects for all age cohorts and for women in particular, are not bright given that growth depends primarily on public projects (e.g., physical infrastructure) and construction work in general, where mostly prime age males find more job opportunities.

Benin still has a lot of ground to cover to promote formal sector business creation. Although some improvements have been introduced, Benin ranks number 170 out of 183 countries, and it is behind many SSA countries according to the World Bank's "Ease of Doing Business" ranking for 2011. While its SSA counterparts have been improving their position, Benin has somewhat stagnated in two core enabling factors, namely number of procedures and days to start a business. In terms of financial costs, Benin lags behind its SSA counterparts. It takes 7 procedures, 31 days, more than 15% of income per capita, and almost 300% of paid-in minimum capital to start a limited liability company<sup>20</sup>. This is evidently driving many entrepreneurs into the informal sector.<sup>21</sup>

Besides the shortfalls to the government mentioned above, informality frequently penalizes both firms in the formal and the informal sector. Informality penalizes the formal sector because the government charges formal sector businesses higher taxes to partially compensate for the reduced taxes it can charge informal sector businesses that do not pay taxes. Informal sector businesses are penalized because they in turn, can't access credit in the formal financial market. Rather they can only have access to credit from microfinance institutions (MFIs) where a premium is paid on the commercial banks' lending rate. Both factors are a source of inefficiency for the economy, since its ability to create sustainable and quality jobs are confined. That said, it is important to remember that the informal sector is a vital source of livelihoods for the vast majority of Beninese households; therefore, a correct mix of policies to allow a path out of the informal and a smooth transition to the formal sector will be necessary. A deeper analysis of this issue is beyond the scope of the present study.

## Growth Sectors

According to a recent Observatory for Employment and Training study, there are nine growth sectors in which youth could find formal employment opportunities. These are the garment industry, transport,

<sup>20</sup> The World Bank. (2011). *Doing business 2011: Benin*.

<sup>21</sup> It is worth mentioning that despite some improvement in the past years in Ease of Doing Business, the informal sector does not stop growing. This may be reflecting the impact of liberalization of the economy that puts pressure on the import-competing sector and therefore crowding labor out of the formal to fetch job opportunities in the informal one.

services, chemical industry, telecommunication, food processing, commerce, and handicraft. While these sectors reportedly have high potential for growth, where labor demand is expected to be high in the next 2 to 3 years is among the latter four, i.e., telecommunication, food processing, commerce, and handicraft. As stated in Benin's Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Government of Benin recognizes the importance of diversifying the agriculture sector with an emphasis on strengthening the agro-processing sector. In addition, as discussed in the previous section under informal sector opportunities, tourism in the formal sector holds opportunities for youth. For example, the Ministry of Tourism is reportedly anticipating a large scale port development project in Cotonou for which construction and eventually service sector jobs at hotels, restaurants and retail stores would need to be filled.

Within the agro-processing sector, the government has prioritized support to the following specific

#### ***Snapshot of Employment in the Cashew Sector in Benin***

The Afonkantan Benin Cashew (ABC) Factory is located in Tchaourou, Benin and employs 70 regular employees, mostly women, but has capacity to employ 400. Employees with little education tend to work in the husking and stripping jobs.

- Training consists of 10 days-1 month depending on the specific job.
- Female employees stay on the job anywhere from 1 month to 3 years.
- Shelling is the most tedious and yet lucrative job, earning a monthly salary is 30,000-60,000 CFA.

agricultural products: cashew nuts, pineapple, palm seeds, and cassava. Cashew nuts have received specific attention as a significant growth sector for Benin. GIZ, the West Africa Trade Hub, the African Cashew initiative and other programs have put forward value chain analyses and reports that specifically focus on the potential contribution cashew nuts present to the Beninese economy. With total exports exceeding 116, 000 tons in 2008, the cashew sector is the second most important activity in agriculture after cotton for the Beninese economy, accounting for 8% of Benin export earnings, and almost 25% of agricultural revenues in 2008.<sup>22</sup> While between the 1950s and 1970s Africa produced 70% of world's cashew, Africa only currently represents 28% of the suppliers, second to India, who alone boasts 32% of world production. Benin is considered the 5<sup>th</sup>

world producer of cashews. The most relevant cashew producing regions are in the north of the country, the most important ones being Zou-Collines and Atacora-Donga.

As is the case in other agricultural activities in Benin, the great majority of the cashew produced in country is exported raw (over 97%) largely to India. This creates a weak link between production and consumption along the value chain in Benin and certainly opens the door to great opportunities in processing cashew nuts. However, there are many challenges that inhibit stakeholders from reaping greater revenues from this sector; these include aging plant material, low plantation productivity, poor control of market access rules, stunted local processing capacity and lack of incentives to invest in such activities.<sup>23</sup> As of 2007 Benin only processed between 2% - 3% of its cashew transformation capacity, which represented roughly between 0.07% and 0.1% of total production. Besides the other challenges mentioned above, a major

<sup>22</sup> Tandjiekpon, A. (2009). *La Filière Anacarde au Bénin : Problématique, Enjeux Sociaux, Economiques, Environnementaux et Perspectives*

<sup>23</sup> On average 400kg per hectare while it could reach up to 1,500 kg/h; Tandjiekpon, A. (2005). *Mieux produire l'anacarde au Bénin: Référenciel technico-économique*.



problem facing the development of cashew value chain in Benin, as in many other West African cashew producers, is the high price to final local consumers.<sup>24</sup> On average, supermarket retail prices reach nearly \$14 USD per kilo. That price per kilo is nominally similar to prices in the USA or Europe, which means that very few can afford to consume cashews in Benin. This explains why a great bulk of the cashew produced is exported.

In terms of industrial processing capacity, Benin presently has only one major firm, Afonkantan Benin Cashew, (ABC), located south of Parakou. ABC has a processing capacity of more than 1,000 tons per year but is actually functioning at around 50% of its capacity. The entire production of ABC is for export to the Netherlands principally under the label Pride of Benin (Soglo and Assogba, 2009). Other firms with lower capacity (about 150 tons per year) are GK5, AFETRACA, ZANCLAN, Shongai Center and GNICOBOUT.

Opportunities to strengthen the cashew sector include better marketing/packaging and selling broken nuts at low price at stores or to bakeries and restaurants. In addition, cashew butter, which could be used as an input for a wide range of cashew products, is almost unknown in Benin. Potential exists for cashew butter which would not require a huge investment in terms of technology and knowledge to start with industrial production, as the process is similar to making peanut butter. Processing plants using similar technology in peanut butter can also be used to produce cashew butter that could turn out to be lower in cost for bakeries. Finally, there is also production value from use of cashew apples to produce spirits, jams, juices, biofuel, etc. According to a recent study, more than 600,000 tons of cashew apples are discarded and left to rot each year in Benin.<sup>25</sup> The minimal training requirements for cashew processing makes this sector an appealing income-earning option to out-of-school youth and female youth in particular.

### ***III.4 Profile of Technical and Vocational Training Offerings for Youth***

Vocational training programs currently offer out-of-school youth the most accessible option for gaining skills to enter the job market. As the schema of the Benin education system below illustrates, for youth with a CEP degree or above, there are various options for vocational training in various sectors including agriculture. However, for youth with less than a CEP degree, the employment training options are very few. (See the following section on “Alternative Education” for a discussion of accelerated and alternative education initiatives).

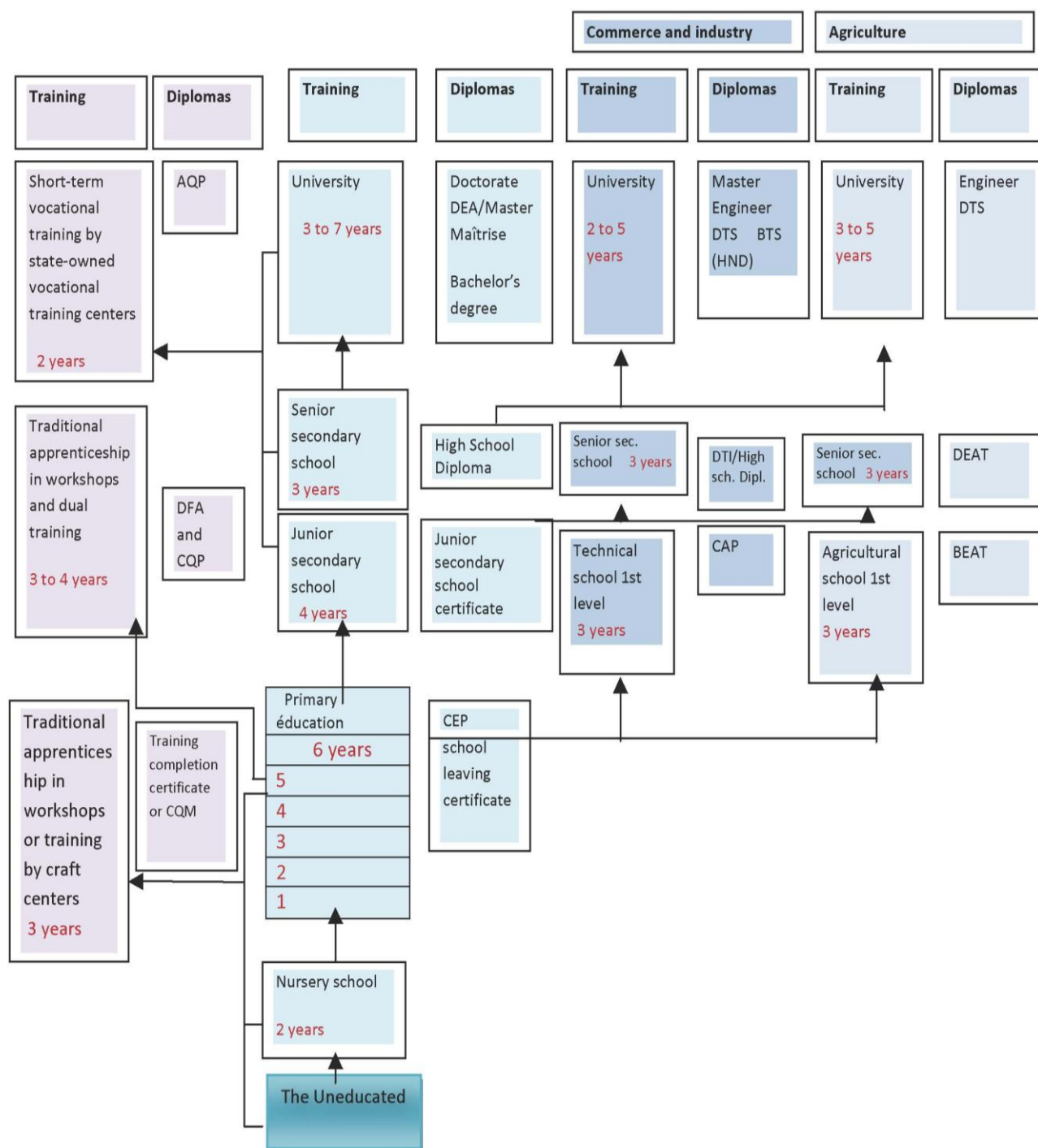
---

<sup>24</sup> Boilereau and Adam. Cashew Marketing & Consumption in West Africa: Current Status & Opportunities Working Paper West Africa Trade Hub Technical Report. September 2007.

<sup>25</sup> Tandjekpon, A. (2009). *La Filière Anacarde au Bénin : Problématique, Enjeux Sociaux, Economiques, Environnementaux et Perspectives*



Figure 2: Education System and Basic Training in Benin



SOURCE: EDC field data (2011)

The “artisanale” or handicraft sector is currently the only main employment sector in Benin where there is a standardized, credentialed vocational training program appropriate for youth with low levels of education. As a result of support over the past years from various European donors, the **dual apprenticeship system** was formally established in 2001 under the Government’s Technical Education and Professional Training reform. The dual apprenticeship system includes 210 recognized different trades or crafts, of which 12 have an established training curriculum. The 12 trades are: bicycle/motorcycle mechanics, hairdressing, tailoring, refrigeration and air conditioning, electricity, plumbing, welding, construction, carpentry, metalwork, weaving, auto mechanics.

There are two main training tracks and certificates through the current training systems: The **Certificat de qualification professionnelle (CQP)** and the **Certificat de qualification au métier (CQM)**. However, the government has not yet established a structured curriculum, program, and evaluation system for the CQM.

Swiss Contact continues to be a major supporter of the vocational training system and the CQP training track in particular. The CQP program is a three- year program consisting of 4 days of workplace training in a workshop with a “patron” or master and one day of classroom-based training that consists of theory, French language and numeracy and some “soft skills” including management. In order to qualify for the program, youth must have already secured an apprenticeship with a patron for one year prior to the start of the CQP program. The youth must also have a minimum of 5 years of primary schooling to be qualified to take the entry exam. The apprentices are selected based on their results on a national exam. The number of places in any given year is dependent upon available government and donors funding for Fund for the Development of Continuing Vocational Training and Learning (FODEFCA). In 2011, 1,339 apprentices will reportedly be funded.

The training fee is 450,000 CFA for three years. Youth contribute 7% of the program costs, SwissContact contributes 3%, and the remaining 90% is covered by Fund for the Development of Continuing Vocational Training and Learning using a fund provided by DANIDA for this specific purpose. However, an apprentice still needs to cover a fee they pay to their patron for their apprenticeship which is around 150,000 CFA for the 4 years.

The **CQM** is the alternative certificate program for youth who have not completed the CEP level in school. It is also a three-year program. The government and the National Craftworkers’ Confederation’s plan is to award the CQM jointly benchmarking it at the level of practical and occupational skills acquired by apprentices or craft workers. While the CQM is not yet formally in place, a number of institutions and regional Associations are modeling a process for awarding it against their own criteria.

Trainings targeting the CQM and CQP degrees are offered through a network of private and public training centers throughout the country. Currently there are 56 public and private centers offering the CQP program. A system of Centres de Metiers (CM) are envisioned for offering the CQM program however as of yet, only the CM in Cote d’Ivoire is operational out of 4 CMs. The tables below list the training centers offering the CQP and centers de métier planned for offering the CQM.

**Table 6: Distribution of Institutions Offering CQP**

LOCATION	VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTERS AND SCHOOLS		TOTAL
	State- owned	Privately- owned	
PARAKOU	-----	10	<b>10</b>
COTONOU	03	07	<b>10</b>
PORTO- NOVO	01	06	<b>07</b>
<b>KANDI</b>	-----	01	<b>01</b>
<b>MALANVILLE</b>	-----	01	<b>01</b>
<b>INA</b>	01	01	<b>02</b>
NATITINGOU	01	02	<b>03</b>
<b>DJOUGOU</b>	01	02	<b>03</b>
<b>SAVE</b>	-----	01	<b>01</b>
ABOMEY	01	-----	<b>01</b>
<b>BOHICON</b>	01	01	<b>02</b>
<b>ABOMEY -- CALAVI</b>	-----	06	<b>06</b>
<b>SEMEKPODJI</b>	-----	02	<b>02</b>
<b>POBE</b>	01	01	<b>02</b>
<b>AVRANKOU</b>	-----	01	<b>01</b>
<b>AZOVE</b>	-----	02	<b>02</b>
LOKOSSA	-----	01	<b>01</b>
<b>DOGBO</b>	-----	01	<b>01</b>
Total	<b>10</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>56</b>

**Table 7: List of Centres de Metier (CM)**

Name of Center	Commune/Départ d'implantation	Trades Offered
<b>Centre de Métiers de Pahou</b>	Ouidah / Atlantique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Froid et climatisation,</li> <li>- Plomberie</li> <li>- Construction métallique</li> </ul>
<b>Centre de Métiers de Nikki</b>	Nikki / Borgou	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Couture /Broderie</li> <li>- Maroquinerie,</li> <li>- Tissage,</li> <li>- Pisciculture</li> </ul>
<b>Centre de Métiers de Covê</b>	Covê / Zou	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Construction Métallique,</li> <li>- Menuiserie,</li> <li>- Menuiserie Ebénisterie,</li> <li>- Agriculture (élevage),</li> <li>- Mécanique 2 roues,</li> <li>- Couture,</li> <li>- Tissage</li> </ul>
<b>Centre de Métiers de Sê</b>	Sê / Mono	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poterie,</li> <li>- Construction Métallique,</li> <li>- Transformation des produits végétaux et halieutiques,</li> <li>- Agriculture (halieutique et élevage),</li> <li>- Mécanique auto et moto</li> </ul>

Since the CQM training system is not yet fully operational, the remaining option for youth outside of the CQP or CQM is to apprentice with an atelier in a trade, according to the traditional approach. An apprenticeship consists of a three- to four-year commitment in which the young person commits to working with an atelier and being trained on a specific technical trade. The apprentice pays a fee to the patron and the patron may or may not provide the youth with remuneration. At the end of the three to four years (depending on the trade), the apprentice is qualified to take an exam to earn the Traditional Apprenticeship Completion Exams (EFAT) diploma, set by the handicraft industry.

### **Role of Private Sector**

The private sector is engaged at different points throughout this system. First and foremost, local “master artisans” are responsible for providing the major portion of the “on the job” skills training to youth apprentices in the dual apprenticeship system. As the President of the Natitingou Artisans Association noted, the master artisans serve such a central role in youth apprentices’ lives that they are almost like parents to the youth. At the design stage of the specific curricula for each trade, artisans associations and collectives and the Benin National Confederation of Artisans (CNAB) are able to contribute to the development of the curricula. In addition, the national level formal private sector representative body, the National Patronat, contributes funding to FODEFCA that is used to support training fees for youth in the CQP program and skills upgrading training for patrons. The National Patronat is also a member of the national level steering committees that allows them to provide input into the Ministry of Secondary Education and Professional Training’s training systems and programs. At the local level, local artisans associations are engaged in the development of the EFAT in order to ensure the tests are linked to core skills and competencies and to make them more consistent. The artisan

associations also provide support to local youth-serving organizations by helping them find apprenticeships for youth completing alternative education programs, (e.g. GRADH in Parakou).

## Opportunities

---

Financial support from the Government for the programs offers real opportunities to strengthen the skills and employability of disadvantaged youth who would otherwise not have the capacity to pay.

Youths graduate from the CQP program attest to having both a stronger familiarity with the technical skills needed for their trade as well as stronger customer service skills and other “soft skills” that give them a more professional manner, as a result of the program. Although employers have not spontaneously showed any willingness to pay a higher cost for a CQP holder compared to a simple trainee of a workshop, they have nevertheless expressed their preference for the CQP holder due to the fact that “it is always easier to work with a colleague with whom one speaks the same language.”

Beyond trainings in the handicraft sector, there are trainings in other sectors that hold potential for employment for disadvantaged youth, including tourism. A new vocational training initiative targeting the informal job market in the tourism sector is being developed in partnership with the Ministry of Secondary and Professional Training, Ministry of Tourism and SNV entitled, “High Impact Tourism Training” Program. The multi-country initiative will conduct value chain analyses of the tourism sector in focus countries, develop training curricula and standards and seek to train 1000 youth in Benin and 8000 in all its focus countries. This program presents an opportunity that could be built upon to capitalize upon training programs benefitting out-of-school youth in the tourism sector.

In addition, this study’s rapid assessment of opportunities for low-skilled youth in the agro-processing sector suggests that there are excellent opportunities to develop training programs targeting youth for agriculture. Currently, there are no structured training programs with certification, such as the CQM or CQP for agriculture sector. Given the centrality of agriculture and animal husbandry to rural communities, the development of a certified training program for these areas that would target rural youth would make it highly accessible and appealing to parents and families because the direct linkage to the families’ livelihoods.

## Gaps

---

There are also several notable constraints on either side of the supply/demand of the current vocational system. One major constraint noted by training centers, youth-serving organizations and artisan associations is youth’s lack of sufficient skills to qualify for the CQP program. Many youth seeking to participate in the training do not pass the qualifying entrance exam because of insufficient French literacy and numeracy skills. This underlines the importance of the CQM program which is not yet fully established but which would respond directly to the needs of this cohort of youth. One planned response to this constraint is USAID/Benin’s plan to partner with UNICEF in a new accelerated learning for out of school youth called Second Chance Schools.

On the supply side, another constraint is the limited funds available from FODEFCA to pay for more youth to participate. Of the number of youth who qualify, the funds available cannot cover the full demand.

Moreover, not all master artisans are supportive of their apprentices participating in training programs, such as the CQP. Some view it as more effort for them because they have to allow the apprentice to leave 1 day of the week for the training.

Another gap in the “supply side” of the training system is the lack of diversification within the trades that can be studied through the CQP or CQM programs. While there are technically 12 trades that are available in the overall dual apprenticeship program, many of the centers actually only offer a small number of these. For example, there are only two centers that offer weaving, carpentry, welding, metalwork and air conditioning. In addition, there is limited if any linkage between the local job market and the trades offered in any given training center. The CM curriculum model was originally envisioned to be developed based on local market needs in order to support a localized market niche for the apprentices trained in that locality. However, it appears that training centers are choosing the trades they offer less discriminately and without strong analysis of the local market for those trades. Moreover, the available training in trades that are more traditionally appealing to young women is limited to hair styling, tailoring and weaving, leaving fewer options for young women and making them more vulnerable to risks of market saturation of those trades. These issues ultimately beg the question is the training sufficiently linked to real job market needs or is there a risk of job market saturation particularly for the most common trades, such as mechanics, hair styling and tailoring. A study by SwissContact in 2009 did undertake market research on select trades (motor mechanic, hair styling and tailoring) for the towns of Cotonou, Porto Novo and Parakou to verify that investment in vocational training in select trades is relevant to the market. However, this study’s research is limited to these towns and there seems to be little similar market data for other towns and regions in the country. But, most importantly, it does not clearly appear that such studies are currently being considered in the allocation of training opportunities in the dual apprenticeship training program.

While private sector groups participate in established decision-making channels, such as the steering committee for the National Employment Agency (ANPE) and FODEFCA, they have expressed that they are not able to provide meaningful input through these channels, despite the funding they contribute. Moreover, it is not evident that the private sector itself has the tools and the capacity to maximize its contribution.

One response is the establishment of a professional internship in major enterprises operating in the same area or even with master craftsmen operating well-organized enterprises. This would strengthen the skills of the newly qualified youth and would prepare them for independent or paid work. To date, there are some positive experiences of internships, such as these, with carpentry and car repair businesses.

Despite the relatively strong systemization of the vocational training system in general, there are a few fundamental shortcomings, principally the lack of a follow-up job placement or support for trained youth. It would seem the government recognizes this weakness, as suggested by the fact that authorities modified the name of the Ministry of Vocational Training by adding to it, "reconversion and professional integration of the youth" on the occasion of the last cabinet reshuffle (April 2011).<sup>26</sup> One of the two main

---

<sup>26</sup> The Ministry’s new title is: the Ministry of Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational Training, Reconversion and Insertion of the Youth.

areas of follow up support to youth that is currently weak is “accompaniment.” Accompaniment can include mentoring, coaching, business linkages, role modeling, and financial services. Experience has shown that it is the accompaniment component that is the most crucial service to provide to youth. In addition, the content of trainings offered to the youth in training centers does not encompass life skills in a structured way (such as planning and time management) likely to facilitate the employment of the youth. Additionally, training curricula do not include entrepreneurship and leadership training.

Finally, without access to financing to start their own business, the youth are compelled to resort to other activities for their survival. A pilot program supported by Swiss Contact and AFD with a group of CQP holders seeking to establish their own businesses combines both accompaniment and financing to youth entrepreneurs. The pilot program provided training and follow-up to youth on the development of a realistic business plan and then linked youth to MFIs who have agreed to the idea of supporting "unusual clients" who do not have material or financial guarantees. Swiss Contact's support and monitoring of the youth serves as the only guarantee for the MFIs who have accepted to grant credits up to CFA Francs 300,000 refundable over 18 months with three deferred months. That type of experience is worth being evaluated and enhanced. There are also a few other examples of business plan development or management training for youth, yet tools and approaches are not well structured, systematized or controlled. The International Labor Office (ILO)'s entrepreneurship trainings, on the other hand, are well-known globally and are offered in Benin. They include: Know About Business, and the programs Better Manage Your Business (GERME), Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB). These provide a participatory coaching both on the development of an adapted and relevant business plan and on management of micro and small enterprises.

Beyond the gaps within the existing vocational training program for the handicraft sector, another major gap in employment training is the lack of well-developed training systems for other sectors that hold potential for youth employment such as tourism, agriculture or cultural sectors. There have been some valuable experiences in agricultural-related training that should be reinforced and replicated, such as the SONGHAI center model Porto- Novo and Parakou. As a research and training center promoting sustainable agricultural practices, this center trains young agricultural entrepreneurs, especially out- of school - youths, to run self sufficient farms. But the scope of its actions is still limited as the center only accommodates up to 30 trainees by session. Another example is the ILO project called, “Skills for Youth Employment and Rural Development in Western and Southern Africa” (CEJEDRAO) based in Cotonou, which also offers good chances for youth employment in rural areas. In fact this five-year project financed by DANIDA is focusing on : i) introducing the ILO's Training for Rural Economic Empowerment methodology in a number of rural communities to support local economic development, and ii) upgrading informal apprenticeship to reinforce youth employability. A recent study carried out by the project on the promising areas for rural employment confirmed the potential for youth employment within agricultural and agro-industry activities. However, the project which is at its inception phase is meant to reach a very limited number of communes. Finally, there was an earlier government experience promoting agricultural employment among out-of- school youth through short-term trainings through “Centres de Promotion Rurale” in Atacora and Donga regions. This program did not last long due to a lack of both preparation and follow up, although it did confirm a need for the promotion of employment in this sector.

### ***III.5 Profile of Alternative Education Offerings for Youth***

“Alternative education” is defined here as all systematically organized educational activities organized and implemented outside of the formal school system to promote specific types of learnings for specific target groups.<sup>27</sup> Alternative education offerings in Benin vary from literacy to accelerated learning programs as well as technical and professional trainings including traditional apprenticeships. This section of the report focuses on a discussion of the current and planned alternative and accelerated learning programs to benefit out-of-school youth, their gaps and opportunities.

In the past, literacy programming in Benin had been largely focused on adult learners with little or no strategies for addressing literacy needs of unschooled or out-of-school children and youth. Programs were also not linked to practical training and so there was minimal relevance of the program content to needs of learners. Increasingly, however, literacy for out-of-school/unschooled youth has become integrated into other sectors that have improved these programs’ relevance.

Based on growing attention to the literacy needs among out-of-school youth, drawing from studies by UNICEF, Cooperation Suisse and others, there is expanding support for alternative education programs to target out-of-school youth age 10-15 to enable them to either reintegrate into the formal schooling system or provide foundational skills that can allow them to enter the workforce.

The term “Programme des Cours Accelères” (PCA) encompasses all alternative education initiatives that target particular groups (Children in difficult situations, children who are too old for the formal primary education) and aims to provide them with a basic education. The target group is out-of-school and non-schooled youth aged 10 to 17. Upon completion of the PCA, the objective is to position youth to either reintegrate into the formal education system, technical or professional training or participate in more meaningful ways in the workforce.

There are two main models of alternative education in Benin that are led by donors and implemented by the youth-serving organizations highlighted earlier in this report: the UNICEF-supported Ministry of Nursery and Primary Education (MEMP) model and the Cooperation Suisse-supported, “Projet d’Appui à l’Education et à la Formation des Enfants Exclus du Système Educatif” (PAEFE) model.

#### **1. THE OFFICIAL PCA MODEL (MEMP/UNICEF)**

The MEMP-recommended PCA seeks to increase access to education, thus contributing to universal primary education- Millennium Development Goal 2, which Benin as a nation subscribed to at the Education For All Forum. Consequently, the MEMP put in place an abridged education system tailored for out-of-school and non-educated youth, between the ages of 10-17, that would enable them the chance to study and earn the same CEP that their peers in the normal formal education track would earn. Even though, ordinarily, primary school is completed in 6 years, the PCA is designed to cover the exact same subject matter covered in primary school, but in a maximum of three years only. Depending on their age and interests, after earning the PCA, youth can opt to continue on to secondary school (general, technical or professional tracks) or opt to enlist in an apprenticeship for a trade. Children must sit an entrance test

---

<sup>27</sup> The term “alternative education” is the preferred term in Benin whereas “non-formal education” is viewed as having negative connotations.



to determine their placement level in the PCA. The system is therefore very flexible, not just in relation to the number of years required to complete the program, but also in relation to the academic calendar and the timetable.

There have been significant accomplishments on the part of MEMP regarding the implementation of the PCA:

- Finalization of a feasibility study in 2006 that highlighted the scale of the number of potential beneficiaries of the PCA
- Elaboration and adoption of a technical document which outlines a framework for the different actors, to ensure that beneficiaries benefit from the State and that candidates get accepted to the official CEP
- Undergoing finalization of 5 year strategic plan; completion of a review seminar of this document in August 2011

The general strategy chosen by the MEMP in order to implement the PCA concept is “Faire Faire:” which creates an operational framework for how to engage both government and civil society organizations to implement programs. The strategy promotes “a partnership between the State and civil society organizations that involves an equitable distribution of roles and responsibilities, consensual mechanisms and management tools and management of the implementation of literacy policies and adult education.”

<sup>28</sup> According to the policy, the Ministry assumes the role of orientation, coordination, establishment of norms/standards, quality control and monitoring and evaluation of programs. The government is contracting out private implementing organizations to implement the literacy activities. The government has launched a call for proposals to which NGOs have responded and to date; the process has rolled out well. In some communes, local governments are contributing support to literacy activities through the designation of a “Literacy Coordinator” for each locality.

To the extent possible, therefore, MEMP will allow implementing partners to conduct project activities. They will, however, only step in to set up centers in disadvantaged zones where there is no implementing agency presence. This ongoing PCA process is supported by UNICEF and other organizations, who are also interested in financing PCA activities, include HELVETAS and DANIDA.

## **2. THE PAEFE MODEL**

The Projet d’Appui à l’Education et à la Formation des Enfants Exclus du système éducatif (PAEFE) was designed and put in place to provide basic educational needs of children aged 9-15 who are otherwise excluded from the educational system. The PAEFE, financed by Swiss Cooperation, is implemented by Helvetas, and is expected to last 15 years. Activities began in September 2010. According to an initial Helvetas study that was conducted, there are 80,000 to 100,000 9-15 year olds who were unable to go to school for various reasons. Consequently, seven communes have been selected where PAEFE will be implemented. Six villages were selected in each commune, totaling 42 villages. The program will begin in the first year with 3 villages per commune. Depending on the results and commitment of these

---

<sup>28</sup> Ministère de la Culture, de l’Alphabétisation, et de la Promotion de Langues Nationales. (August, 2010). *Document cadre de mise en oeuvre de la stratégie du faire au Bénin*.

communes, additional villages will be added progressively. The first villages to benefit from PAEFE have already been identified and the CI curriculum has already been elaborated. The PAEFE consists of 4 components:

- Local language instruction (95% in the first year of the program)
- All cognitive subject matter (teaching in primary school levels) in local language but in French condensed over 4 years as well ; French progressively gets introduced more over as the cycle progresses
- Technical training
- Culture

Contrary to the MEMP-UNICEF PCA, this program is bilingual in nature: learners are first solely instructed in local language for years one and two. Progressively, French is introduced as the language of instruction. The PAEFE program lasts four years as opposed to three, and includes manual work which is intended to prepare the youth for working life. In the same way, however, learners sit for the CEP exam upon completion of the course, and choose afterwards to continue on a general track, switch to technical/professional training or pick a trade. The PAEFE model is inspired by the AFIDE model in Burkina Faso, where there is a specialized service in alternative education in the Ministry of Education as well as a communal fund for all partners to support the implementation of the alternative education program.

Lessons learned from positive experiences in Niger and Burkina Faso, where variations of the PAEFE program are currently being implemented, imply that this model could have a lot of potential in Benin. It has been found that graduates of the PCA tend to be more well-rounded: not only do they tend to be confident in expressing themselves in local language as well as French, score higher grades in the CEP, but they also tend to be more mature and are on the whole, better prepared to tackle life than their peers graduating from primary school.

## Opportunities

---

Significant momentum has been building within government and the donor community around the concept of a PCA and there is strong political will to promote it, as indicated by the MEMP support of validating the PCA concept. In addition, the government's policy of "Faire Faire" creates an operational framework for how to engage both government and civil society organizations to implement programs. The strategy promotes "a partnership between the State and civil society organizations that involves an equitable distribution of roles and responsibilities, consensual mechanisms and management tools and management of the implementation of literacy policies and adult education." According to the policy, the Ministry assumes the role of orientation, coordination, establishment of norms/standards, quality control and monitoring and evaluation of programs. The government is contracting out private implementing organizations to implement the literacy activities. The government has launched a call for proposals to which NGOs have responded and to date; the process has rolled out well. In some communes, local governments are contributing support to literacy activities through the designation of a "Literacy Coordinator" for each locality.

The emphasis on flexibility within both the PAEFE and PCA models to adapt to local needs and different implementing partners creates opportunities for integrating or adapting them to the CQP, CQM or traditional apprenticeship training where youth are in great need of a skills leveling in literacy and numeracy.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Secondary Education, Technical, Vocational Training and Retraining of the Youth Integration, a literacy program is being developed as part of preparation for the CQM. In the same vein, there is a specific program for recipients of microfinance that will start shortly.

## **Gaps**

---

One current drawback of existing alternative education programs is the fact that they are small projects having relatively small impact on the vast educational needs of out-of-school youth. As discussed above under “Profiles of Youth-Serving Organizations,” the institutions working in alternative education are not positioned institutionally or financially to scale up their initiatives.

Moreover, the current alternative education initiatives appear to suffer from a lack of coordination with the State as well as between the different donors that fund them. The “Faire Faire” strategy may be an effective response to this situation, allowing a balance between innovation at the grassroots level along with Government coordination and oversight. However, there is a need for coordination as led by the Government on all efforts in this area.

The MEMP and UNICEF-supported PCA model will reportedly include practical skills training content; however, it is important to confirm that the content envisioned will be sufficient to enable youth completing the program to transition to more meaningful participation in the labor market or to entrepreneurship. It will be essential that the curricula developed include “employment-oriented” skills such as work readiness skills and foundational technical skills that can prepare the youth for the possibility that they may transition to apprenticeships or vocational training, if appropriate.

### ***III.6 Profile of Donor & Government of Benin Youth Policies and Programs***

While there are few specific youth-centered policies, the Government of Benin, with the support of its donor technical partners, has a framework of policies and programs that contribute to a supportive environment for youth employment and education. At the broadest level, the government established a youth policy in 2001 which stated its commitment to support youth’s access to literacy education and economic participation. Beyond this national youth policy, no additional youth-specific policies were identified. Government commitments and strategies related to priority issues that impact out-of-school youth, such as employment training, access to growth sector jobs, and literacy education are addressed in broader government policies that are not youth-specific. For example, the Poverty Reduction Strategy of 2007 discusses specific commitments to investing in growth sectors, including those that can benefit women, which will presumably benefit youth. In addition, the National Action Plan for the Implementation of Education for All (EFA) prioritizes “the development of innovative education approaches targeting out-of-school youth.” Additionally, as discussed in detail in section III.4, the state-supported vocational training system with its established policies and programs directly support out-of-school youth.

In terms of operationalizing these priorities, there no lack of government institutions carrying out programs that affect youth. Below is a list of those with most relevance to youth employment, vocational training and alternative education.

Government Institution	Government Program Related to Employment and Education for Youth
<b>Ministry of Microfinance, Youth and Women's Employment</b>	<p>The Ministry of Microfinance and Employment of Youth and Women is the umbrella body for over 700 organizations that include Cooperatives, NGOs, Savings/Credit Associations and government projects. Their range of programs for strengthening this diverse sector is carried out on national and regional levels. They include policy for employment creation, support to companies who employ youth, making available funds for to Micro Finance Enabling Projects through Micro Finance Institutes.</p> <p>This is a strong well-functioning and well-connected Ministry that is interested in partnership opportunities.</p>
<b>L'Agence Nationale pour la Promotion de l'Emploi (ANPE)</b>	<p>ANPE was founded in 2003. Its mission is to contribute to the development and implementation of a national policy of employment by facilitating a partnership between the supply and demand side, training provision and employers. Its two main focuses are increasing access to salaried employment through youth work readiness and internship programs and the promotion of self-employment through business skills training using the ILO Start Your Own Business method. These two programs are Aide à l' l'insertion et au Développement de l'Embauche (AIDE) and Programme d'Appui à l'Emploi Indépendant (PAEI).</p>
<b>Le Fonds National pour le Promotion des PME et de l'Emploi des Jeunes (FNPPEJ)</b>	<p>FNPPEJ was established in 2007 and aims to facilitate access to credit for youth graduates to start and grow a business. Youth who qualify receive business skills training through ANPE.</p>
<b>Le Fonds de Développement de la Formation Professionnelle Continue et de l'Apprentissage (FODEFCA)</b>	<p>FODEFCA is responsible for promoting, assessing, selecting, and funding skills development and training initiatives for those both in and out of employment. They provide the 90% portion of the training fee for apprentices in the dual-system. The apprentice is responsible for the remaining 10%. FODEFCA is also responsible for assisting businesses, craft workers and those working in the modern and informal sectors of the economy to identify their training and skills development needs by drawing up training plans and programs.</p>
<b>Le Projet d'Appui à la Promotion d'Emploi des Jeunes (PAPEJ)</b>	<p>PAPEJ has UNDP funding to promote youth employment. They provide policy direction, disseminate information about the labor market and employment creation programs, and promote activities to maintain employment and create new jobs. The objective of PAPEJ is to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Micro Finance and Employment, Youth and Women, through its structures for the promotion of employment such as the ANPE, the National Fund for Enterprise and Youth Employment, the Observatory for Employment and Training by contributing to expanding opportunities for rural employment or for the benefit of peri-urban poor, especially youth and women.<sup>29</sup></p>

<sup>29</sup> The assessment research could not obtain data on numbers placed in jobs as a result of these programs, nor was it clear that these programs had systems that tracked youth or collected data on numbers or percentages of youth placed in jobs.

Government Institution	Government Program Related to Employment and Education for Youth
Le Fonds National de la Microfinance	This fund provides microcredit for the poorest. The majority of the beneficiaries are unemployed woman in both rural and urban areas.
Ministry of Culture, Literacy and Tourism	<p>This Ministry links with the Ministry of Art, Crafts and Tourism who have their own programs. This Ministry has literacy programs for women and youth that promote literacy in local languages through literacy centers in each commune, working with NGOs. Their cultural programs are small and include all creative arts, music, photography and film, drama and dance, art, weaving, and sculpture.</p> <p>The Tourism Department is responsible for government development and implementation of policy related to strategic tourism infrastructure development initiatives. They do not fund youth training programs, leaving that to the private sector.</p>
The Ministry of Youth, Sports and Recreation	Ministry of Youth has activities in several different areas including supporting youth civic participation, training and financial support to youth entrepreneurs, and establishing of youth centers.
Ministry of Secondary Education, Professional Technical Training, and Youth Placement	The Ministry of Secondary Education is responsible for a range of professional and vocational training including its Dual Apprenticeship Training Program that leads to the CQP certificate; Training of Atelier "Patrons" to reinforce their technical expertise; "Centres de Metiers" to reach lower education level of youth, those who have not completed primary school, and "Formation par Internance" for youth at the BPC level.
Ministry of Maternal and Primary Education (MEMP)	The Ministry of Maternal and Primary Education is responsible for ensuring education equity for all children. They focus on out-of-school youth who require a second chance at the formal education system. The aim is to get them the CEP qualification so that they can continue on to secondary school, or at least have greater access to job opportunities. They are responsible for the accelerated learning programs (PCA) that offer an abridged curriculum over three years instead of six.

In addition, there are a number of major donors involved in funding initiatives and programs that benefit out-of-school youth. The following is an overview of some of the main donor programs in Benin related to employment and alternative education.

Institution	Programming related to Employment and Education for Youth
DANIDA	Danida has been supporting the Ministry of Vocational Training and FODEFCA in the implementation of vocational training under the "dual apprenticeship system" by assisting in the financial support to FODEFCA. They have supported the development of one public training center in Abomey. This training center has been slow to start up due to delays in procuring equipment and only a few trades have started. DANIDA, however, is shifting their development assistance strategy in Benin to focus on basic education through budgetary support to the government.
Agence Française de Développement (AFD)	AFD has been supporting primary and vocational education, but their programs end in 2011 and their program focus will shift to supporting secondary education.
Agence Belge de Développement (BTC)	BTC are working in value chain enhancement at a commune level in the agriculture sector. They partner with the Ministry of Agriculture to initiate and develop projects. This will expand in the future with La Facilité d'Appui aux Filières Agricoles. The direct beneficiaries of the intervention of FAFA will be the producers. BTC also has a decentralised children and health program that will expand in the near future.

Institution	Programming related to Employment and Education for Youth
Swiss Cooperation	Swiss Cooperation is one of leading groups supporting alternative education programs. They are also supporting vocational training and are interested in expanding and developing a program that supports youth who cannot enter into the formal system (CQP).
UNICEF	UNICEF provides support the Ministry of Maternal and Primary Education and is leading the development of the PCA strategy to provide an alternative education program for youth.
World Bank	World Bank contributes toward basic education through their support to the Fast Track Initiative. They are also funding a 5-year credit and grant to the Government of Benin called the Agriculture Productivity and Diversification Project which aims to restore and improve productivity and value addition for selected value chains.
European Union (EU)	The EU has supported alternative education programs including Aide et Action and other youth-serving NGOs.
GIZ	GIZ has traditionally supported the vocational training sector in Benin but is focusing its support now on agriculture, including the cashew sector.

## Opportunities

The numerous existing initiatives in the area of alternative education and employment training serve as a foundation for USAID to leverage in order to maximize impact. As discussed in Section III.4, investment by other donors and implementing agencies, such as Swiss Contact and DANIDA to strengthen the vocational training system in Benin has created a strong accredited training system and policy framework into which USAID could channel support for complementary services to further strengthen youth's access to skills training and employment or livelihood opportunities. Furthermore, support from Swiss Cooperation and UNICEF to several literacy and accelerated learning pilot programs has led to valuable models that are positioned to be replicated or scaled. In general, the donor community working in the area of youth education and employment training brings a valuable base of experience and lessons that can be utilized for future program design.

In addition, the government's multiple initiatives and institutions created to address many of the issues relevant to youth employment and livelihoods, such as access to credit, training, and job placement, demonstrates its recognition of the needs of youth. The existence of these government institutions serves as a platform for partnerships that can ideally help lead to scaled and more sustainable efforts.

At the local level, program interventions that have successfully engaged support of communal governments and Mayors have been much more successful in sustaining the programs beyond donors funding.

## Gaps

The large number of different Ministries and departments working on programs related to youth workforce training, placement and education has contributed to weak coordination and information sharing between initiatives. Moreover, limited resources are spread across different initiatives/programs

within different Ministries and departments, pooling these resources might generate a more effective impact. According to an organizational audit conducted on Benin's education sector, a recommendation was made to merge the different Ministries focused on education into one single body, in order to address this issue.<sup>30</sup> However, it is not clear if this recommendation is politically feasible.

The numerous donor-supported programs working in alternative education and employment support contribute to a situation in which different organizations funded by different donors work in parallel in the same sector without a common approach across organizations and communities.

### **III.7 Overview of Relevant Youth Programs in West Africa**

Below are a number of youth employment and livelihood programs in West Africa that are worth highlighting.

#### **EQUIP3:**

- **Mali :** EDC is working with Swiss Contact and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to implement the five-year program, Support to Youth Entrepreneurs Project (PAJE – Nièta). The program's focus is on generating economic opportunities for youth in rural and peri-urban areas and engaging them in their communities. Services include: functional literacy in their native language, French oral language skills, work readiness training, entrepreneurship training, livelihood accompaniment support, and access to information services related to employment and agricultural markets. PAJE-Nièta is working through a youth volunteer corps, consisting of 200 unemployed youth graduates to coordinate project activities and support their peers in all the training activities.
- **Liberia:** EDC implemented a two-year pilot program in Liberia called "Core Education & Life Skills for Liberian Youth" (CESLY) that was based on two educational models of alternative basic education:
  - Accelerated learning which provided a Grade 1 to 6 curriculum in three years for overage child students and youth.
  - Nonformal Education program which provided literacy, numeracy, life skills and work readiness lessons to youth aged 15 and above, with a great focus on girls and women.

#### *Program results included:*

- 17,829 learners enrolled in USG-supported primary schools or equivalent non school-based settings .
- 75% of nonformal education enrollment is female.
- Participants improved their reading fluency scores by 39% and reading comprehension scores by 37% from baseline to midline applications of the Early Grade Reading Assessment
- 64% of accelerated learning graduates transitioning into post-program options (junior secondary school or workforce development placements).

Based on the CESLY successes, under EQUIP3, EDC will begin a new five year program in Liberia in late 2011 that will include a focus on literacy and workforce transition for youth.

---

<sup>30</sup> "Audit institutionnel, organisationnel et fonctionnel du secteur de l'éducation du Bénin", Management Unit of the Fast Track Initiative, MEMP. April 2011.



### Making Cents International:

The U.S.-based firm, Making Cents is working in Guinea, Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria, Mali, and Liberia to implement a range of different youth-focused programs. These include livelihoods curricula for out of school youth in cocoa-producing regions of Ghana, financial literacy curricula, agricultural training for youth farmers in Liberia, and agribusiness support in Niger and Nigeria.

### SwissContact:

- **Burkina Faso:** They are working in Burkina Faso to set up vocational training for the handicraft sector.
- **Niger:** SwissContact is partnering with the National Office for Vocational Training in Niger to organize short vocational courses for unemployed youth. Courses last an average of one month. SwissContact is developing modular lessons on the subjects of food, motorcycle maintenance and tailoring. Courses are being offered in the sectors that have the greatest potential in each of the respective regions. Alongside practical expertise, the curriculum also includes reading and writing, as well as health-related themes, prevention, or even the reality of migration. Having completed their training, the young people receive professional advice and support in looking for jobs. Coaching is also offered for youth seeking to start their own business.

Additionally in Niger and in Mali, SwissContact is offering agricultural vocational training to 10 municipalities in Niger and one region in Mali. Many activities take place in existing vocational training centers with practical lessons taking place on the farmers' fields.

### Swiss Cooperation:

- **Burkina Faso:** Swiss Cooperation funds a national “fund” for coordinating donor and government support to literacy programs. In addition they are funding local associations to offer literacy programs.
- **Mali:** Swiss Cooperation is supporting a program enabling children and young nomadic peoples to gain access to basic education and to training adapted to their living conditions. The proposed educational system takes the local languages into consideration, a factor that not only takes account of rural reality, but also necessitates mobile infrastructures. Thus, in 2009, more than 20 mobile schools were put into operation for the teaching of 700 children from the Peul, Bozo and Tamashek communities.
- **Niger, Mali, Benin and Burkina Faso:** Swiss Cooperation is supporting an innovative method for teaching mastery of language called “Pedagogy of the Text”. The “Pedagogy of the Text” approach focuses on the capacity of the pupil – child or adult – to master language involving the active analysis of oral and written texts. The teacher urges the pupil to explain, describe, argue about, take a position on, and express his or her feelings about the text. Its objective is to develop autonomous thinking and a critical spirit. This method is also applied to disciplines other than languages, i.e., mathematics, social sciences, life sciences, and earth sciences. It promotes taking into account the student’s empirical knowledge, the systematic practical application of learned knowledge and a “balanced” bilingualism that uses and promotes the African languages as well as French during the entire learning process.

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BENIN OUT-OF SCHOOL YOUTH PROGRAMMING

### IV.1 Youth Beneficiaries with Greatest Unmet Needs & Most Potential for Impact

This study has identified three youth cohorts in Benin whose needs appear to be either overlooked or insufficiently met by planned or existing youth education or employment training programs:

✓ **Out of school young women age 15-25:**

Young women benefit from vocational training programming for the handicraft sector that has been developed over the past several years in Benin; however, their opportunities are limited to a few, traditionally female sectors (weaving, tailoring, hair-dressing) which may have limited market relevance. There are pilot programs that are training women for diversified livelihood activities, however, these are small scale and are not a part of the credentialed vocational training system.

✓ **Out-of-school male and female youth age 10-14:**

There is no systemic skills building and employment program that targets out of school youth age 10-14 within the existing alternative and employment training portfolio in Benin key donor organizations and the Government recognize that this age group is particularly excluded and they have several initiatives under development to be launched in the coming months. Nonetheless this study identifies some specific types of interventions that would complement the activities already planned by other donors. . Acknowledging that youth 10-14 are legally too young to enter the labor market, this report recommends that programs targeting this age cohort be “employment oriented” to respond to their unique situation.

✓ **Out-of-school male and female youth with education level less than CM1 level :**

There is a significant cohort of male and female youth aged 15-25 who meet the minimum age to participate in the CQP program, yet because they have either never attended school or dropped out of school prior to earning their CEP, they lack the basic literacy/numeracy skills to participate.

The assessment team’s proposed program considerations for reaching these cohorts are presented below.

### IV.2 Support to Youth Serving Organizations

Below are a few cross-cutting interventions that would address needs of various cohorts of youth:

- Supporting a **youth-led development approach** to youth programming would channel funding through youth associations and groups of youth to build their capacity to develop programs that worth toward livelihood creation and training. Such an approach might involve building the capacity of budding youth leaders and youth associations, training youth in leadership, management and planning and creating a small grants disbursement mechanism to youth groups. While this approach could be a separate project unto itself, it can also be a strategy used within an existing or new youth

education or workforce project, with the goal of empowering youth as a means of transferring skills and contributing toward sustainability.

- Building on the existing network of youth centers/spaces (“Maisons des jeunes”) to develop educational and recreational spaces for youth. Programs could include “work readiness skills” (See below), civic education, and job/career counseling. An effective strategy would also engage both Mayors and communes as well as the Ministry of Youth counterparts to design activities and identify local resources to support the programs.
- Continue to support community sensitization campaigns related to girls rights (education, civic participation), early marriage and trafficking for communities and young women.

### **IV.3 Vocational & Employment Training**

- The **development of new training specializations for agriculture, tourism, and culture (i.e., music, dance, arts) within the CQP and CQM certificate programs** would attract male and female youth. This effort would promote more diversified training opportunities for out-of-school youth, help to increase the value of those trades in the market place and position male and female youth for more strategic income-generation activities. As part of this process, USAID could support the development of a new skills charter and fund the roll out of the system. Activities could involve curriculum development and training of trainers, in collaboration Swiss Contact who has been providing technical assistance in some of these areas.

One immediate-term approach could be to collaborate with SNV’s HITT program that is targeting the creation of informal jobs within the tourism sector.

- There is a need for a **package of “Work Readiness Skills” trainings** that would be adaptable, according to the needs of training beneficiaries and local contexts. Training content could focus on entrepreneurship, work readiness skills such as “communication, problem solving, planning, job searching skills, how to conduct oneself on the job, etc.” This package could be integrated into the PCA or CQP/CQM training certificates programs.
- Greater investment in **“accompaniment” (coaching) of trainees would have a strong impact in equipping them with skills and linkages for success in starting a business. Accompaniment should consist of coaching, mentoring and linking to credit.** Programs that assist youth graduates to start their own businesses are well documented. The ILO SIYP model is already well known and effective in Benin. Existing models should be encouraged to be more practical and to screen the entrants before starting. Entrepreneurial aptitude is important for success. The method of offering access to startup capital should be reviewed to ensure that youth take ownership and responsibility for providing some matching funding. The interest rate and delay in repayment times of existing programs need to be reviewed.

As part of coaching and business support services, efforts should encourage a spirit of collaboration and team work among youth, with the goal of promoting the idea of working together to form

cooperatives. This would help respond to challenges youth graduates face in obtaining resources to start a business on their own.

- **Strategies for promoting role models particularly to female youth would strengthen alternative education and vocational training programs.** The goal would be to expand exposure of apprentices and trainees to entrepreneurs working in non-traditional crafts beyond coiffeur and couture. Types of activities might include information campaigns or visits for youth trainees to non-traditional businesses where role models are working.
- There are **innovative models** already in practice in Benin **that can be expanded or replicated to strengthen sustainability of training models and scale up youth's small businesses.** One model worth considering is the education for sustainable development model. As government funding in Benin is insufficient to respond to the large needs of all the youth, training centers should be encouraged to adopt creative methods to generate income to help defray training costs. In this model, the center and the learner are involved in making products for sale to external customers that earn a profit that goes to the learner and the training center. The profit for the learner either goes into a savings account for post training equipment or is used to pay for school fees. Throughout the work, the young person gains real world work experience and by working with a customer (customer service and quality), business skills are developed. Income generation starts as early as possible in training or apprenticeship so participants learn business and get income. The Songhai Center in Parakou in Benin as well as the "Teach a Man to Fish" program in Paraguay are examples of this model in practice.
- The proliferation of informal micro businesses in the handicraft sector points to a need for **support to scale micro businesses** to help increase entrepreneurs' revenues, allow for hiring more employees, and ultimately move youth out of subsistence-level economic activities. The Government's "Agence National pour la Promotion des PME's" might be a possible partner to support.

#### Education for Sustainable Development:

##### College d'Enseignement Technique Agricole- Ina

The College d'Enseignement Technique Agricole, Ina is a Technical Agricultural High School under the Ministry of Secondary Education that offers a 4 year program resulting in BEAT (same as BEPC).

The school has 200ha of land that they use for practical farming. They grow crops and vegetables, have animals, grow teak trees for wood, and have recently planted cashew nut trees. They make more money from their sales of produce (after feeding students) and the government provides in grants (almost 40% of income).

During the first two years all students follow the same courses and then for the third and fourth year they specialize in either animal husbandry or vegetable production. There are 355 students, 183 are borders, and about 30% are female. Youth age 14 and higher may apply and those selected receive free education and board. Students are reportedly attracted to the program because they know many graduates will get jobs in government agencies, particularly forestry, or in local agriculture NGOs. Some are interested in having their own farms or expanding the produce on their parents' farms.

One model worth considering as a strategy for scaling up existing micro-businesses is the concept of **"Micro-franchising."** Microfranchising is a term used to describe a business model targeting opportunities at the "Bottom of the Pyramid" in which a product or products are sold through different levels of salespeople and managers. Businesses have been launched in multiple sectors, such

as health clinics and sale of cell phones. The Fan Milk business is good example of this in Africa. The regional business employs a range of shop-owners to whom it supplies Fan Milk products and who are then responsible for sales of Fan Milk within their locality. Each of these shop-owners hires their own network of vendors to sell the Fan Milk product in those local communities. The model allows for profit at all levels of the business network and fosters income-generation activities appropriate for different profiles of entrepreneurs with different levels of available resources and capital.

#### ***IV.4 Alternative Education/"2nd Chance" Programs for youth***

- The development of a **literacy and numeracy skills upgrading or "mise a niveau" program** to help prepare youth who lack sufficient French, and math skills to qualify for the CQP program is a relatively 'quick impact' activity for out of school youth that would greatly strengthen youth's opportunities to access training opportunities. The skills upgrading program can be offered through existing public and private training centers that offer CQP program as well as the centres de métier.

As recommended above, a French/math skills upgrading program could be complemented by the "work readiness skills" training package.

- **Mother's Associations** used through other education programs in Benin can serve as a model for engaging young women as part of the operationalization of a PCA program. The experience of teaching in primary level has showed that associations of mères d'élèves play a significant role in promoting access to, attendance and performance of girls. In relation to PCAs, this would ensure that the specific needs of girls are taken into account. "Mothers' associations could be used in the pilot initiatives of the PCA to help guide hiring of teachers, recruitment of students, and apprenticeship strategies.
- Consider collaborating with l'ANOPER, who has contributed significantly to creating schools in peulh neighborhoods, and the coordination of activities in numerous local language literacy centers, to develop and set up pilot project, a pilot PCA specifically for children of nomadic pastoralists.

#### ***IV.5 Potential Partners within Government of Benin and among YSOs***

- **Collaborate with other donors through the existing "Cadre de Coordination" donor group on Education to promote coordination and synergies between donors and ministries.** Within this coordinating framework, donor members could commit to promoting a single "package" of trainings and services that would be offered throughout the network of YSOs and government centers. Each donor would commit to contributing technical assistance or funding to one or two components, such as 'work readiness training' or 'accompagnement' services, while other donors would support other pieces of the overall package. In this way, various donor funds would be maximized and leveraged.
- Support key ministries, such as the Ministry of Secondary Education and Professional Training or Ministry of Maternal and Primary Education, **to create and maintain an MIS system for vocational training and alternative education programs.** Such a system would track youth trained and their

status post training, i.e., enrollment in formal schooling or placement in further training or work. Artisans Associations and CQP/CQM training centers would be trained on maintaining the system.

#### **IV.6 Private Sector Engagement**

- In order to equip the private sector with the tools and structure to allow it to contribute more substantively to the design of vocational training programs and to strengthen the understanding among trainees of what businesses will expect from apprentices and employees, there is a need for creating a "**référentiel des compétences**" for each type of diploma as a basis for the design of training programs. Furthermore, there is a need for an operating framework that will allow the private sector to contribute to the description of the profile of the future effective employees they need as they have a better understanding of the market needs. Follow-up guidance, hand-holding, or "accompagnement" to the private sector might also be necessary to ensure that the private sector is able to provide input.
- Another strategy to revitalize the role of private sector in vocational training programs that could be piloted in select regions in Benin is the creation of **local or regional level public-private alliances**. **Local public-private alliances** can be more effective than national level mechanisms for engaging the private sector because local stakeholders are more connected to the communities and their needs and decision-making about resource allocation is localized and tends to be less bureaucratic. **Government, businesses, donors and youth-serving organizations in each locality would work together to identify common priorities, while each contributes resources and information to support youth training and employment.** Such a public-private partnership would encourage a spirit of 'win-win,' where businesses can gain skilled employees and apprentices, and government and donors can gain help in placing youth with workplace experience and internships or jobs. Trainers from the centers have opportunity to visit the workplaces and learn best practice and industry needs in order to appropriately train the youth. A similar model, implemented by the International Youth Foundation in the Philippines, Morocco, and India, worked very well.
- This public-private partnership model can also foster other collection and sharing of relevant data and information. For example, public and private sector collaboration at the regional level could help to **generate and disseminate job market data** at the regional level in order to inform vocational training programs and the selection of trades for training centers that are tailored to local market realities.

## V. A WAY FORWARD

Going forward, the EQUIP3 Benin youth assessment can help to shape USAID/Benin's priorities for youth programming in its new country program. While the scope and scale of USAID's future youth programs will depend on available resources, the Mission's vision of how to support youth employment and livelihood opportunities should respond first and foremost to the youth with the greatest unmet needs: out-of-school youth who lack their CEP or who have had no formal schooling at all--particularly female youth. The youth assessment revealed a context full of challenges and employment preparedness needs among these youth. At the same time, there is also a foundation of systems and services that provides numerous opportunities for further strengthening, scale and replication. Other donors are welcoming of USAID's support to fill gaps and complement their activities. Openings exist for adding services not offered, like French language literacy, coaching and mentoring. With multiple donor-supported different initiatives, however, coordination is hugely important, as is the need for government counterparts to take the lead in operationalizing policies and being results-oriented. Private sector in Benin is in many ways unique in its interest and willingness to take on a larger role contributing to youth programs, but youth initiatives need to be structured so that there is a real channel for their participation and assistance may be needed to help them assume this role. Finally, future USAID youth programs should consider using a youth-led development approach that empowers youth to be active in program design, implementation and monitoring.



## VI. SOURCES

Africa Commission. (July, 2010). *Growth and employment: Visions at work*. Retrieved from <http://www.africacommission.um.dk/NR/rdonlyres/5E78A809-83CF-4BED-98F8-D305D1BB745D/0/RapportFINALENG.pdf>

Africa Commission. (July, 2010). *Growth and employment: Visions at work*. Retrieved from <http://www.africacommission.um.dk/NR/rdonlyres/5E78A809-83CF-4BED-98F8-D305D1BB745D/0/RapportFINALENG.pdf>

African Economic Outlook. (2011). *Country notes: Benin 2011*. Retrieved from [http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/fileadmin/uploads/aeo/Country\\_Notes/2011/Full/Benin.pdf](http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/fileadmin/uploads/aeo/Country_Notes/2011/Full/Benin.pdf)

African Peer Review Mechanism. (January, 2008). *APRM country review report: Republic of Benin*. Retrieved from [http://aprm-au.org/sites/default/files/cr6\\_benin\\_eng2008.pdf](http://aprm-au.org/sites/default/files/cr6_benin_eng2008.pdf)

Boillereau, N. & Adam, B. (September, 1997). *Cashew marketing & consumption in West Africa: Current status and opportunities*. Submitted to USAID. Retrieved from [http://anacardium.info/IMG/pdf/22\\_Cashew\\_Retail\\_Market\\_Study.pdf](http://anacardium.info/IMG/pdf/22_Cashew_Retail_Market_Study.pdf)

CIA. (August, 2011). Benin. *World Factbook*. Retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bn.html>

CRC Sogema. (April, 2011). *Rapport d'audit (version préliminaire): Audit institutionnel, organisationnel et fonctionnel du secteur de l'éducation du Bénin*. Longueuil, Canada: Author.

DANIDA. (2008). *Gender Equality in the Private Sector*. Retrieved from [http://www.danidadevforum.um.dk/NR/rdonlyres/27708C2A-B3AF-4E19-9FCF-DEE5931CA974/0/054\\_GEIntheprivatesector.pdf](http://www.danidadevforum.um.dk/NR/rdonlyres/27708C2A-B3AF-4E19-9FCF-DEE5931CA974/0/054_GEIntheprivatesector.pdf).

Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (May, 2011). *Evaluation à mi-parcours du Plan Décennal de Développement du Secteur de l'Education (2006-2015) au Bénin*. Kongens Lyngby, Denmark: DANIDA.

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ). (February, 2011). *Analysis of the Benin cashew sector value chain: The African cashew initiative*. Retrieved from: <http://www.agoatoolkit.com/agoa/English/Select%20Products/Cashews/Cashew%20sector%20Development%20Country%20Study/01.pdf>

Fèvre, B., Bellouti, A., & Kirchberger, A. (June, 2011). *Review of Technical and Vocational Training Policies in Benin*. Submitted to UNESCO-ILO Mission. Paris, France: UNESCO.

Honlonkou, A. & Odjo Ogoudele, D. (2010). *ILO Les institutions du marché du travail face aux défis du développement: Le cas du Bénin*. [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_emp/@emp\\_elm/@analysis/documents/publication/wcms\\_144397.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/@emp_elm/@analysis/documents/publication/wcms_144397.pdf)

Hounmenou, J.C. (June, 2011). *Bilan sur l'atteinte des objectifs de l'Education Pour Tous au Bénin, dix ans après le forum de Dakar*. Cotonou, Benin: Coalition Béninoise des Organisations pour l'Education Pour Tous.

International Fund for Agricultural Development. (February, 2011). Special issue on youth and agriculture. *FIDAction in West and Central Africa*, issue number 20. Retrieved from [http://www.ifad.org/newsletter/pa/e/20\\_full.htm#4](http://www.ifad.org/newsletter/pa/e/20_full.htm#4)

Issa Martyn Kanu. (2011). *Western African Students for Post-Secondary Education [Facebook group]*. Retrieved from <http://www.facebook.com/groups/iduka.west.africa>

Japan International Cooperation Agency. (2011). Activities in Benin. Retrieved from <http://www.jica.go.jp/benin/english/activities/development.html>

Le Centre Béninois pour le Développement des Initiatives à la Base (CBDIBA). (2008). *Creation, but, et objectifs*. Retrieved from <http://www.cbdiba.org/>

Lovett, P. (November, 2004). *The Shea butter value chain: Study synthesis and recommendations for WATH*. Submitted to USAID. Retrieved from <http://gasselconsult.net/shea/sheadocs/Production%20transformation%20Mkting%20West%20Africa%20P%20Lovett.pdf>, Retrieved August 20, 2011

Management Unit of the Fast Track Initiative, MEMP. (April, 2011). *Audit institutionnel, organisationnel et fonctionnel du secteur de l'éducation du Bénin*. Porto Novo, Benin: Author.

Mboup, G. Expert Group Meeting on Strategies. *Solutions for Urban Youth in Africa: Measurement/indicators of youth employment* [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from [http://www.unescap.org/stat/meet/wimdgh/wimdge\\_g8\\_gora.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/stat/meet/wimdgh/wimdge_g8_gora.pdf)

Millennium Challenge Account. (2011). Benin. Retrieved from <http://www.mcabenin.bj/en>

Millennium Challenge Accounts. (June, 2010). *Forum National sur la Problematique Du Financement de L'Artisanat au Benin: Atouts, limites et perspectives*. Retrieved from [http://www.mcabenin.bj/sites/default/files/publication/Rapport%20g%C3%A9n%C3%A9ral\\_Forum%20sur%20financement%20de%20l%27artisanat\\_a.pdf](http://www.mcabenin.bj/sites/default/files/publication/Rapport%20g%C3%A9n%C3%A9ral_Forum%20sur%20financement%20de%20l%27artisanat_a.pdf)

Ministère de la Culture, de l'Alphabétisation, et de la Promotion de Langues Nationales. (August, 2010). *Document cadre de mise en oeuvre de la stratégie du faire au Benin*. Porto Novo, Benin: Author.

Nzamjo, F. (June, 1999). A new approach to sustainable livelihoods: African youth and agriculture. *Development*, volume 42 number 2. Available from <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/development/journal/v42/n2/abs/1110038a.html>

OECD. (2008). OECD country profile: Benin. Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/14/37/40573945.pdf>

PAPEJ Benin. (2010). Le marché du travail au Bénin. Retrieved from <http://www.papejbenin.org/thematiques.html>

Reliefweb. (January, 2011). OFID Supports Transport Sector in Benin. Retrieved from <http://reliefweb.int/node/380723>

SNV Netherlands Development Organization. (November, 2011). *HITT proposal narrative*. The Hague, Netherlands: Author.

Soglo, A., & Assogba, E. (2009). *Étude sur la compétitivité de la filière anacarde au Bénin*. Retrieved from [http://anacardium.info/IMG/pdf/Competitivite\\_de\\_la\\_filiere\\_anacarde\\_au\\_Benin\\_-\\_avr\\_2009.pdf](http://anacardium.info/IMG/pdf/Competitivite_de_la_filiere_anacarde_au_Benin_-_avr_2009.pdf)

Songhai Centers. (2011). Songhai: Africa stands up. Retrieved from <http://www.songhai.org/english/>

Swisscontact. (July, 2009). *Etude d'opportunités sur les métiers concernés par le certificat de qualification professionnelle dans le secteur de l'artisanat: Benin*. Zurich, Switzerland: Author.

Swisscontact. (2011) Opportunities for youth: Benin. Retrieved from [http://www.swisscontact.org/english/pages/PR\\_Dn/PR\\_Dn\\_041\\_Img.php](http://www.swisscontact.org/english/pages/PR_Dn/PR_Dn_041_Img.php)

Tandjiekpon, A. (2009). International Course in Sustainable Forest Management and Forest Certification. *La Filière Anacarde au Bénin : Problématique, Enjeux Sociaux, Economiques, Environnementaux et Perspectives* [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from [http://anacardium.info/IMG/pdf/Communication\\_anacarde\\_SSC\\_Forestry2009\\_Tandjiekpon.pdf](http://anacardium.info/IMG/pdf/Communication_anacarde_SSC_Forestry2009_Tandjiekpon.pdf)

Tandjiekpon, A. (2005). *Mieux produire l'anacarde au Bénin: Référenciel technico-économique*. Retrieved from [http://www.anacardium.info/article.php3?id\\_article=187](http://www.anacardium.info/article.php3?id_article=187)

Terre Des Hommes. (2011). Info: Benin-Nigeria. Retrieved from  
[http://s3.amazonaws.com/webdix/media\\_files/810\\_info\\_benin\\_11\\_en\\_web\\_original.pdf](http://s3.amazonaws.com/webdix/media_files/810_info_benin_11_en_web_original.pdf)

UNDP Benin. (2010). *Carte de potentialités d'emplois des jeunes et des femmes dans les communes du Benin*. Cotonou, Benin: Author.

UNESCO. (May, 2010). *Document de strategies d'appui de L'UNESCO a l'éducation nationale au Benin*. Paris, France: Author.

UNESCO. (2007). Supporting literacy for integrated development: Benin POTAL MEN. Retrieved from [http://uil.unesco.org/fileadmin/bamako\\_conf\\_2007/UIE-Effective-Programmes/01\\_en.html](http://uil.unesco.org/fileadmin/bamako_conf_2007/UIE-Effective-Programmes/01_en.html)

UNICEF Benin. (March, 2006). *Etude sur la faisabilité d'un programme de cours accélérés pour les enfants céscolarisés et non scolarisés de 10-17 ans au Benin*. Cotonou, Benin: Author.

UNICEF Benin. (April, 2011). *Document modèle pour un programme de cours accélérés au Benin*. Cotonou, Benin: Author.

UNICEF. (March, 2010). Statistics: Benin. Retrieved from [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/benin\\_statistics.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/benin_statistics.html)

United States Department of Labor. (August, 2008). 2007 Findings on the worst forms of child Labor: Benin. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/48caa45fc.html>

United States State Department. (2010). *Country reports on human rights practices rights report: Benin*. <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/160520.pdf>

USAID. (February, 2011). Benin: Education at a glance. Retrieved from <http://www.usaid.gov/bj/education/index.html>

USAID. (February, 2006). *Benin strategy statement*. Retrieved from [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PDACG991.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACG991.pdf)

USAID. (February, 2009). *Final report: Benin training program global training for development*. Retrieved from [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PDABR480.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDABR480.pdf)

Walter, R. & Filipiak, E. (2008). *Towards a renewal of apprenticeship in West Africa: Enhancing the professional integration of young people*. Submitted to Agence Française de Développement. Retrieved from [http://www.eib.org/attachments/general/events/luxembourg\\_18112008\\_apprentissage\\_en.pdf](http://www.eib.org/attachments/general/events/luxembourg_18112008_apprentissage_en.pdf)

Walter, R. & Filipiak, E. (2008). *Nouvelles forms d'apprentissage en Afrique de l'Ouest: Vers une meilleure insertion professionnelle des jeunes*. Submitted to Agence Française de Développement. Retrieved from <http://www.agropolis.fr/formation/pdf/2007-Walter-Filiapiak.pdf>

Walther, R. (June, 2006). *Vocational training in the informal sector: Report on the Benin field survey*. Submitted to Agence Française de Développement. Retrieved from <http://www.afd.fr/jahia/webdav/site/afd/shared/PUBLICATIONS/RECHERCHE/Scientifiques/Documents-de-travail/019-document-travail-VA.pdf> (English)

The World Bank. (2009). *Benin: Constraints to growth and potential for diversification and innovation country economic memorandum*. Retrieved from [http://web.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/07/21/000333037\\_20090721001130/Rendered/PDF/482330ESW0BJ0p1C0Disclosed071171091.pdf](http://web.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/07/21/000333037_20090721001130/Rendered/PDF/482330ESW0BJ0p1C0Disclosed071171091.pdf)

The World Bank. (2011). *Benin country brief*. Retrieved from <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/AFRICAEXT/BENINEXTN/0,,menuPK:322649~pagePK:141132~piPK:141107~theSitePK:322639,00.html>, Retrieved August 20, 2011

The World Bank. (2011) *Benin's infrastructure: a continental perspective*. Washington, DC: Author.

The World Bank. (2011). *Doing business 2011: Benin*. Retrieved from <http://www.doingbusiness.org/~media/FPDKM/Doing%20Business/Documents/Profiles/Country/DB11/BEN.pdf>

The World Bank. (2011). EdStats: Household survey education profiles. Retrieved from <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTEDUCATION/EXTDATASTATISTICS/EXTEDSTATS/0,,contentMDK:22302305~menuPK:6422592~pagePK:64168445~piPK:64168309~theSitePK:3232764,00.html>

The World Bank. (2006). *Implementation completion report on a credit ... to the Republic of Benin for a labor force development project: March 1, 2006*. Retrieved from [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2006/03/08/000012009\\_20060308095408/Rendered/PDF/346010rev0pdf.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2006/03/08/000012009_20060308095408/Rendered/PDF/346010rev0pdf.pdf)

The World Bank. (2000). *Project appraisal document on a proposed Credit ... to the Republic of Benin for a labor force development project: June 9, 2000*. Retrieved from <http://www->

wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSCContentServer/WDSP/IB/2000/07/19/000094946\_00063005311636/Rendered/PDF/multi\_page.pdf

The World Bank. (2008). *Republic of Benin growth strategy for poverty reduction: April 2007*. Retrieved from <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRS1/Resources/Benin-PRSP%28April2008%29.pdf>

The World Bank. (2010). *Worldwide governance indicators country data report for BENIN, 1996-2009*. Retrieved from <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/pdf/c18.pdf>

[World Food Programme. \(January, 2004\). \*Development Project Benin: Promotion of Formal and Non-Formal Education of Children and Youth\* http://one.wfp.org/operations/current\\_operations/project\\_docs/103080.pdf](http://one.wfp.org/operations/current_operations/project_docs/103080.pdf)

## **VII. ANNEXES**

*Annex 1: List of Key Informants & Organizations Interviewed*

*Annex 2: Assessment Schedule*

*Appendix 3: Table of Key Findings & Recommendations by Objective*

*Annex 4: Youth Focus Group Methodology & Protocol*

## Annex 1: List of Key Informants & Organizations Interviewed

Organization	Key Informants
Association des Jeunes pour l'Eveil et le Développement	
ABC cashew plant	Mr. Adebayo Bissiriou
Abomey Vocational Training Center	Mr. Xavier Ehahoun, Technical Manager
Agricultural Technical College of Pobè	Mr Ibrahim Moumouni Director
AIC	Mr. Narcisse Djegui, Permanent Secretary
Aide et Action	Mrs Berthe Tehou, Country Manager (Benin) and P.A.D.O.E2 Coordinator (Benin,Togo)
ALIDE	Mr Valère Houssou
ANOPER	Mr. Alfa Tidjani Aboubacar, President of ANOPER Mr. SANNOU Bio Pierre, Administrative and Financial Officer Mme. SABI Gogué Amina, Secretary Mr. Bani Sounon, Guardian Mr. Sika Moussa, Member Mr. SABI Allou, Treasurer
ANPE	Mr Igor Agueh In Charge of Communication and Public Relations
Artisans' Union of Glazoué	Mr. Didier C. Allagbé, President Mr. Véronique DAGAN, Treasurer Mr. ALABA George Bruno, Membre
Belgium Cooperation	Mr Soulé/ In Charge of Agriculture and Decentralization
Bureau d'Appui aux Artisans	Mr. Jacques Essou
CAMFP	Mme. LASSISSI Rissikatou, Coordinator Mr. IDRISOU Souley, In Charge of Training Mr. BIAOU Herman, In Charge of Crop and Animal

	Production Mr. SAKA Alidou, In Charge of Marketing
Centre de Metier de Covè	Mr. Jules Ahindé
CERPA Atacora-Donga	Mr. Richard Tokoloé, General Director
CETA/Ina	OMONGBO Mama, Censor
CFAD	AGBATCHI Pierre, Farm Manager Mr Marius Adjovi, Director
CIAT in Komiguéa	Mr. Yantannou Sarki, Director
CIFA	Students: Damien ATINKOSSI and AHOTONOU Dimitri and their supervisor, Mr. HOUSSOU Bruno
CRADIB NGO	Mr. GNANHO Pascal, Directeur Exécutif de CRADIB- ONG
DANIDA	Mr. Eric Sossouhounto, Education Team Leader
Derana-NGO	Mr. LAFIA Brice Gado, National Coordinator Mr. Sime KOTO SERO, Program Officer
Djougou Vocational training Center	Mr. Thomas Akomedi, Director Mr. Elian Boco, Technical Manager
FODEFCA	Mr Jean Tossavi, Executive Secretary Mr. Thimoléon AHOUANGNIVO
French Development Agency (AFD)	Ghislain Kouton
GRADH-NGO	Mr. Grégoire Sonounamèto, Borgou Coordinator Mr. Landry Amoulé, Alibori Coordinator
Helvetas/ PAEFE	Mr. KOFFE MOUSSA Aboubacar, PAEFE Coordinator Mme. Im-Raschina GARBA, Deputy PAEFE Coordinator



INSAE	Mr Biaou Alexandre, Director (DED) Mr. Jabar Adechian, Director DSS
LYTEB	Mrs. Sylvie Gbenou, Head of Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Section
Mairie of Natitingou	Mr. Noël Kouagou
MCAAT/ Department of Literacy	Mr. Aristide Adjibodou Literacy Technical Advisor
MCAAT/ Department of Tourism	Mrs. Antoinette Kabine, Tourism Technical Advisor
Microfinance and employment of youth and women.	Mr. Eusèbe Agoua, Technical advisor for employment
Ministry of Culture, Literacy, Artisanry and Tourism (MCAAT)/ Department of Culture	Mrs. Rachida de Souza; Culture Technical Advisor
Ministry of Industry, Trade, Small and Medium Enterprises	Mr Adam Ahanchede
Ministry of Kindergarten and Primary Education	Mr Bauro Bagoudou, Alternative Education Focal Point
Ministry of Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational and Training, Reconversion and Insertion of the Youth	Mr. Yessoufou Issiakou Bienvenue, Director of Pedagogical Supervision
Ministry of Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational training/ Regional Department of Ouémé-Plateaux	Mrs Abègnonhou, Head of Department
Ministry of Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational Training, Reconversion and Insertion of the Youth/ Direction of Vocational Training and Qualification (DFQP)	Mr Moussiliou Moustapha, Director
Ministry of Youth, Sports and Leisure	Mrs. Sidonie Lima, Director of Youth and Associative Life (DJVA) Mr. Michel Olou, Chief of the Youth and Associative Life Section

National Patronat	
Natitingou Local Union of Artisans	Mrs. Marguerite Gnotodera, President
Office of the Mairie of Glazoué	François d'Assise Bachola, First Deputy Mayor of Glazoué
Office of the Mairie of Kandi	Bouraima Zakary, Second Deputy Mayor
Parakou Local Union of Artisans	Mr. Yacoubou Sourokou, President Mr. Amos Yabi, Vice-President Mrs. Afoussa Osséni, Treasurer
PIED-NGO	Mr. Moussa Amadou, Executive Director
Ruth Center (BUPDOS-NGO)	Mme. TCHANKA Ruth, Manager
Sianson- Microfinance	Euloge Idimi, Auditeur
Sianson-ONG	Mr. Mohamed Assouma Yazi, In Charge of the Promotion of grassroots initiatives Mr. Hubert Torou, PAEFE Coordinator
SNV	Mrs. Dellaphine B. Rauch-Houekpon, National Director Mr. Guy Ouinsou, National Team Coordinator Rosman Gerrit Johan, Advisor
Songhaï Center of Parakou	Mr. FANGNINO Sylvain
Songhai Center of Porto Novo	Mr. Justin Lekoto, In Charge of Training
Swiss Cooperation	Mrs. Rufine Sama Yéko In charge of Education-Monitoring-Evaluation
Swisscontact	Christiane Dèhouè, In Charge of the Organization of Vocational Training Constance HOUSSOU, Chief Accountant, Acting Program Officer
Swisscontact-Parakou	Mr. Fousséni Chacran, Chief of the North Branch
UNICEF	Mrs. Alima Boukary, Education Specialist Mr. Bah Mamadou, Chief of Education Section

UNICEF	Mme. Nadine Oké, Education Officer/Life Skills Mr. Mamadou BAH, Chief of Education Section
Union of artisans of Kandi	Mr. Sirina Imorou, President Ismaïla Amadou, Secretary Séïdou Saadou, Treasurer Aboubakari Yacoubou, Member
USAID	Kevin Armstrong- Mission Director Scott Stofel, Program Officer Elvire Ahounou Houenassou, Development Program Specialist (BESST) Marie-Noël Maffon, Education Development Specialist (BESST) Michel M. DAYAMBA, Deputy Program Director Milton B. Amayum, MD.MPH, Family Health Team Leader
World Bank	Mr Gbayé Yacinthe, Education Economist
World Education- Parakou	Al Miller, Director

## Annex 2: Schedule of Activities

### Benin Youth Assessment- Tentative Schedule

August 1-19<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Time	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location	Status
July 30							
Evening	Chris Murray arrives in Cotonou						
July 31							
19:05	Evans, Nancy and Adwoa arrive in Cotonou						
Monday, Aug 1							
9:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Team Meeting:</b></li> <li>• Discuss schedule for week, logistics, tools for meetings</li> <li>• Meet translators, confirm and process contracts</li> <li>• Review approach and tools for youth and community FGDs</li> <li>• Orient youth assessors on approach</li> </ul>					Novotel Hotel, Cotonou	Confirmed

Tuesday, Aug 2	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Key interviewees</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Location</b>
9:00am	Swisscontact		Nancy, Dissou, Chris, Latifou, Evans, Adwoa, Boris, Latifatou	Christiane Dèhouè, In Charge of the Organization of Vocational Training Constance HOUËSSOU, Chief Accountant, Acting Program Officer	95 40 69 60  21 38 34 19	Cotonou
11:00	USAID		Nancy, Dissou, Chris, Latifou, Evans, Adwoa, Dissou	Kevin Armstrong- Mission Director Marie Noel Maffon, Education Development Specialist (BESST) Scott Stofel, Program Officer Elvire Ahounou Houenassou, Development Program Specialist (BESST)	95 95 47 37  96 59 92 59 21 30 05 00 95 96 61 81	Cotonou
14:00	Meeting with DANIDA		Dissou, Nancy, Evans	Mr. Eric Sossouhounto, Education Team Leader	95 28 24 57 21 30 38 62	Cotonou
17:00	Ministry of Kindergarten and Primary Education		Adwoa, Latifou	Mr Bauro Bagoudou, Alternative Education Focal Point	90 06 46 22	Porto-Novo
18:30	<b>Team Debrief</b>					
Wednesday, Aug 3	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Key interviewees</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Location</b>
9:00	Ministry of Culture, Literacy, Artisanship and Tourism (MCAAT)/ Department of Culture		Chris, Martine Dissou Nancy	Mrs. Rachida de Souza; Culture Technical Advisor	97 46 66 00	Cotonou
10:30	MCAAT/ Department of Tourism		Chris, Martine Dissou Nancy	Mrs. Antoinette Kabine, Tourism Technical Advisor	95 30 50 68	Cotonou
10:30	Meeting with INSAE	Dept of Demographic Studies (DED)	Evans Rene	Mr Biaou Alexandre Director (DED)	66 39 47 05	Cotonou
11:30	Meeting with INSAE	Department of Social Statistics (DSS)	Evans Rene	Mr. Jabar Adechian Director DSS	95 47 57 05 21 30 82 44	Cotonou
13:00	MCAAT/ Department of Literacy		Adwoa, Latifatou, Latifou	Mr. Aristide Adjibodou Literacy Technical Advisor	97 07 59 27	Cotonou
14:45	Meeting with UNICEF		Latifou Latifatou, Nancy,	Mrs. Alima Boukary, Education Specialist Mr. Bah Mamadou, Chief of Education Section	97 28 68 69 97 97 51 04	Cotonou
16:00	FODEFCA	Continuing Training and Apprenticeship Development Fund	Chris, Martine Evans, Dissou, Boris (Nancy)	Mr Jean Tossavi, Executive Secretary Mr. Thimoléon AHOUEANGNIVO	97 58 38 39 21 33 96 50	Cotonou
17:30	Meeting with CFAD Site Visit		Chris, Martine Evans, Boris	Mr Marius Adjovi Director	95 53 77 53	Cotonou

18:00	ALIDE		Latifou, Dissou, Adwoa	Mr Valère Houssou	97 08 29 88 <a href="mailto:housoul@yahoo.fr">housoul@yahoo.fr</a>	Cotonou
18:30	<b>Team Debrief</b>					
Thursday, Aug 4	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Key interviewees</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Location</b>
08.30	Meeting with Ministry of Industry, Trade, Small and Medium Enterprises		Evans	Mr Adam Ahanchede	97 98 22 09 ahanchedeadam@yahoo.fr	Cotonou
8:30	Ministry of Microfinance and employment of youth and women.		Chris, Dissou	Mr. Eusèbe Agoua, Technical advisor for employment	90 93 34 40	
10:00	Meeting with ANPE	National Employment Agency	Evans Chris, Martine	Mr Igor Agueh In Charge of Communication and Public Relations	90 92 49 59	Cotonou
12:30	Aide et Action	French NGO active in education	Latifatou, Latifou, Nancy	Mrs Berthe Tehou Country Manager (Benin) P.A.D.O.E 2 Coordinator (Benin,Togo)	97 58 05 11 90 94 25 08	Cotonou
13:30	Team Contract and Per diem		Nancy, Adwoa			
15:00	Departure to Porto-Novo		ALL			
16:00	Ministry of Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational and Training, Reconversion and Insertion of the Youth	Direction of Pedagogical Supervision (DIP)	Latifou, Dissou	Mr. Yessoufou Issiakou Bienvenue Director of Pedagogical supervision	95 05 54 91	Porto-Novo
16:00	Ministry of Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational training/ Regional Department of Ouémé-Plateaux		Nancy, Evans	Mrs Abègnonhou Head of Department	90 98 10 92	Porto-Novo
17:00	Test Focus Group Guide with Youth in Porto Novo		3 translators 3 youth assessors Other team members as observers	10 male and 10 female youths		Porto-Novo
19:30	<b>Team Debrief</b>					
Friday, Aug 5	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Key interviewees</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Location</b>
10h30	Ministry of Secondary Education, Technical, Vocational Training, Reconversion and Insertion of		Nancy, Chris, Dissou, Adwoa	Mr Moussiliou Moustapha Director	95 40 52 94 96 96 25 28	Cotonou

	the Youth/ Direction of Vocational Training and Qualification (DFQP)					
12:00	USAID		Nancy, Chris, Latifou, Adwoa	Kevin Armstrong- Mission Director Scott Stofel, Program Officer Elvire Ahounou Houenassou, Development Program Specialist (BESST) Marie-Noël Maffon, Education Development Specialist (BESST) Michel M. DAYAMBA, Deputy Program Director Milton B. Amayum, MD.MPH, Family Health Team Leader	21 30 05 00 95 96 61 81  96 59 92 59  95 42 05 26 95 95 56 22	
15:00	Agricultural Technical College of Pobè		Dissou, Latifou, Chris, Nancy, Evans, Adwoa	Mr Ibrahim Moumouni Director	97 33 89 10 moumouniibr ahim@yahoo. fr	Porto-Novo/ Songhaï
15:30	Meeting with Centre Songhai And Site visit		Dissou, Latifou, Chris, Nancy, Evans, Adwoa, René, Boris	Mr. Justin Lekoto, In Charge of Training	20 24 60 92 97 28 97 52	Porto-Novo
18:30	Team Debrief					
Saturday, Aug 6	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Key interviewees</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Location</b>
	Rest and Relaxation					
Sunday, Aug 7	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Key interviewees</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Location</b>
Afternoon	Departure for the north		ALL			
Monday, Aug 8	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Key interviewees</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Location</b>
8h30 - 10h	Meeting with Sianson-ONG and beneficiaries	A national literacy NGO	Team 1	Mr. Mohamed Assouma Yazı, In Charge of the Promotion of grassroots initiatives Mr. Hubert Torou, PAEFE Coordinator	97 48 57 92  95 81 40 60	Parakou
10h30-11h30	Meeting with GRADH-NGO and site visit	Alternative education in markets	Team 1	Mr. Grégoire Sonounamèto, Borgou Coordinator Mr. Landry Amoulé, Alibori Coordinator	96 50 40 25 90 94 25 48	Parakou
12h00-13h	Site Visit of CIAT in Komiguéa (7km from Parakou)	A training center on beekeeping	Team 1	Mr. Yantannou Sarki, Director	96 28 55 20	Parakou
15h00-16h30	Meeting with Sianson-Microfinance	Sianson – Microfinance is a micro-finance institution	Team 1	Mr. Euloge Adimi, Internal Auditor	97 68 85 99	Parakou
17h00-18h00	Meeting with the Parakou Local Union of Artisans		Team 1	Mr. Yacoubou Sourokou, President Mr. Amos Yabi, Vice-President	93 99 76 83	Parakou



				Mrs. Afoussa Osséni, Treasurer	95 50 31 98	
18h00-18h45	World Education		Nancy, Chris, Latifou, Dissou	Al Miller, Director	23 61 0 1 89	Parakou
18h30	Team Debrief					Parakou
Tuesday, Aug 9	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
8h30 - 10h00	Entretien avec Swisscontact-Parakou and beneficiaries		Team 1	Mr. Fousséni Chacran, Chief of the North Branch	96 65 97 73	Parakou
10h30-12h30	Meeting with « Bureau d'Appui aux Artisans »	Promotion of apprenticeship	Team 1	Mr. Jacques Essou	90 01 54 40	Parakou
15h00-16h00	Site visit to ABC cashew plant	Cashew processing	Team 1	Mr. Adebayo Bissirou	97 97 83 30	Parakou
18:30	Team Debrief		All			Parakou
Wednesday, Aug 10	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
08h	Departure to Djougou		Team 1			Djougou
10h00-11h00	Meeting with the Djougou Vocational training Center		Team 1	Mr. Thomas Akomedi, Director Mr. Elian Boco, Technical Manager	97 72 18 96 97 14 45 91	Djougou
11h15-12h45	Meeting with PIED-NGO and beneficiaries	PIED-NGO is running an alternative education center	Team 1	Mr. Moussa Amadou, Executive Director	97 64 84 83	Djougou
14h00-17h	Focus group discussion in Djougou		Team 1	A group of female youth A group of male youth including some talibé.		Djougou
18:30	Team Debrief					Djougou
Thursday, Aug 11	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
09h15-10h	Meeting with « Association des Jeunes pour l'Eveil et le Développement »	A youth association	Team 1			Natitingou
10h15-11h00	Meeting with the Mairie of Natitingou		Team 1	Mr. Noël Kouagou,	95 58 94 42	Natitingou
11h30-12h30	Meeting with CERPA Atacora-Donga	CERPA is the regional center for agricultural extension	Team 1	Mr. Richard Tokoloé, General Director	90 04 42 63	Natitingou
14h00-17h	Focus group discussion in Tanguiéta		Team 1			Tanguiéta
17h30-18h30	Meeting with the Natitingou Local Union of Artisans		Team 1	Mrs. Marguerite Gnotodera, President	90 03 46 59	Natitingou
18h45	Team Debrief et night in Natitingou		Team 1			Natitingou

Friday, Aug 12	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
07h00	Departure to Bohicon		Team 1			Bohicon
12h00-13h00	Site Visit of LYTEB	Bohicon Technical School	Team 1	Mrs. Sylvie Gbenou, Head of Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Section	95 05 10 93	Bohicon
13h00-14h00	Meeting with the Abomey Vocational Training Center		Team 1	Mr. Xavier Ehahoun, Technical Manger	97 04 17 65	Abomey
15h30-18h30	Focus group discussion in Allohoun Kodota	Allohoun Kodota is a Zakpota village	Team 1			Bohicon
17h	Site Visit of the Covè CM		Team 1	Mr. Jules Ahindé	96 62 34 39	
	Night in Bohicon		All			Bohicon
Saturday, Aug 13	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
9:00 – 12:00	Team Debrief & Synthesis		All			Bohicon
13:00 – 15:00	Travel to Cotonou		All			Cotonou
Sunday, Aug 14	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
	Rest					Cotonou
Monday, Aug 8	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
8h30 - 10h	Interview with Derana-NGO and with beneficiaries	Derana is a national NGO specialized in literacy	Team 2	Mr. LAFIA Brice Gado, National Coordinator Mr. Sime KOTO SERO, Program Officer	95 16 51 14 23 61 09 20	Parakou
10h30-12h00	Site Visit of CAMFP in Tourou (10km from Parakou)	Parakou Arts and Crafts Centre for Women	Team 2	Mme. LASSISSI Rissikatou, Coordinator Mr. IDRISOU Souley, In Charge of Training Mr. BIAOU Herman, In Charge of Crop and Animal Production Mr. SAKA Alidou, In Charge of Marketing	97 07 38 45 97 72 52 60 97 06 04 78 90 92 32 51	Parakou
12h15-13h	Site Visit of Ruth Center (BUPDOS-NGO)	Training center for Young girls training at risk of gender based violence (forced marriage, trafficking, etc.)	Team 2	Mme. TCHANKA Ruth, Manager	97 11 69 63	Parakou
15h00-18h00	Focus group discussion with youth in Bougnankou and interview with the community	About 25 Km from Parakou in the commune of Pèrèrè	Team 2	A group of female youth A group of male youth A group of youth's parents		Parakou
18h30	Team Debrief		All			Parakou
Tuesday, Aug 9	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
8h30 - 10h30	Site Visit of the Songhaï Center of Parakou and interview with a beneficiary		Team 2	Mr. FANGNINOU Sylvain	97 90 30 93	Parakou
10h30-11h30	Entretien avec le Responsable	Promotion de	Team 2			Parakou

	du FNPEEJ Parakou	l'emploi des jeunes				
11h45-12h45	Entretien avec le Responsable du FNM Parakou	Fonds National de Microfinance	Team 2			Parakou
15h00-16h00	Interview with Helvetas/ PAEFE	Program to Support Education and Training of Children Excluded from the formal education system (PAEFE)	Team 2	Mr. KOFFE MOUSSA Aboubacar, PAEFE Coordinator Mme. Im-Raschina GARBA, Deputy PAEFE Coordinator	90 03 33 38  97 13 74 78	Parakou
18:30	Team Debrief		All			Parakou
Wednesday, Aug 10	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
08h	Departure to Kandi		Team 2			Parakou
09h00-10h00	Site Visit of CETA/Ina and interview with students	CETA / Ina is the Agricultural Technical Center of Ina	Team 2	OMONGBO Mama, Censor  AGBATCHI Pierre, Farm Manager	97 51 66 92  95 60 39 22	Ina
11h30-12h00	Interview with ANOPER	ANOPER is the National Union of Ruminants' Breeders' Professional Organizations	Team 2	Mr. Alfa Tidjani Aboubacar, President of ANOPER Mr. SANNOUN Bio Pierre, Administrative and Financial Officer Mme. SABI Gogué Amina, Secretary Mr. Bani Sounon, Guardian Mr. Sika Moussa, Member Mr. SABI Allou, Treasurer		Gogounou
12h15-13h00	Focus group discussion in Bantansouè (Commune of Gogounou)	Bantansouè is a peulh village	Team 2	A group of female youth A group of male youth		Kandi
14h00-17h00	Interview with the Union of artisans of Kandi		Team 2	Mr. Sirina Imorou, President Ismaila Amadou, Secretary Séïdou Saadou, Treasurer Aboubakari Yacoubou, Member	96 84 34 75  93 27 00 18 96 29 89 07 93 50 50 89	Kandi
18:30	Team Debrief		Team 2			Kandi
Thursday, Aug 11	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
08h30-09h00	Interview with the Mairie of Kandi		Team 2	Bouraima Zakary, Second Deputy Mayor	94 33 24 57	Kandi
09h30-12h30	Focus group discussion in Mongo	Mongo is a Kandi village mainly composed of peulh	Team 2	A group of female youth A group of male youth		Kandi

13h30	Coming back to Parakou		Team 2			
17h00-18h00	PM		Team 2			Parakou
18h30	Team Debrief		Team 2			Parakou
Friday, Aug 12	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Key interviewees</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Location</b>
07h00	Departure to Bohicon		Team 2			Bohicon
09h30-10h00	Interview with the Mairie of Glazoué		Team 2	François d'Assise Bachola, First Deputy Mayor of Glazoué	95 34 34 12	Glazoué
10h10-10h45	Interview with CRADIB NGO and women supported by CRADIB		Team 2	Mr. GNANHO Pascal, Directeur Exécutif de CRADIB-ONG	95 35 84 55	Glazoué
10h 45 – 11h30	Interview with the artisans' union of Glazoué		Team 2	Mr. Didier C. Allagbé, President Mr. Véronique DAGAN, Treasurer Mr. ALABA George Bruno, Membre	95 36 74 84 95323283 97061006	Glazoué
11h45-14h45	Focus group discussion in Kabolé	Kabolé is a Glazoué village		A group of female youth A group of male youth		Glazoué
16h30-17h00	Visit of the Abomey Historical Museum		Team 2			Abomey
18h30	Team Debrief et Night in Bohicon		All			Bohicon
Saturday, Aug 13	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Key interviewees</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Location</b>
9:00 – 12:00	Team Debrief		All			Bohicon
14:00 – 16:30	Travel to Cotonou		All			Cotonou
15h30-16h15	Site Visit of CIFA	CIFA is the Inter-communal Applied Training Center supported by Aide et Action	Latifou, René, Martine	Students Damien ATINKOSSSI et AHOTONOU Dimitri and their supervisor, Mr. HOUESSOU Bruno.	97 79 19 20	Toffo
17:00	World Bank		Nancy, Chris, Dissou	Mr Gbayé Yacinthe, Education Economist	95 56 11 44 hgbaye@worlbank.org	Cotonou
Sunday, Aug 14	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>	<b>Key interviewees</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Location</b>
	Rest					Cotonou

Monday, Aug 15	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
10:30	Swiss Cooperation	Breakfast meeting	Nancy, Adwoa, Chris, Dissou, Latifou, Evans	Mrs. Rufine Sama Yéko In charge of Education-Monitoring-Evaluation	90 04 16 52 rufine.sama-yeko@sdsc.net	Cotonou
Tuesday, Aug 16	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
9H00	Meeting with AIC	Coton Association	Evans	Mr. Narcisse Djegui Permanent Secretary	21 33 23 49	Cotonou
10:00	Belgium Cooperation		Nancy, Latifou	Mr Soulé/ In Charge of Agriculture and Decentralization	96 06 37 64	Cotonou
11:30	SNV	Netherlands' Development Organization	Chris, Nancy, Martine, Dissou	Mrs. Dellaphine B. Rauch-Houekpon, National Director Mr. Guy Ouinsou, National Team Coordinator Rosman Gerrit Johan, Advisor	+229 21 31 42 benin@snvworld.org	Cotonou
14:00	Akpro-Misséréte for FGD;		Youth Interviewees & translators ONLY (Boris, Rene, Latifatou)			Akpro-Misséréte
		Final focus groups				
15H: 00	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Leisure		Dissou	Mrs. Sidonie Lima, Director of Youth and Associative Life (DJVA) Mr. Michel Olou, Chief of the Youth and Associative Life Section	97 98 63 82	Cotonou
17: 00	Meeting with the French Development Agency (AFD)		Latifou, Chris	Ghislain Kouton	21 31 35 80 <a href="mailto:koutong@afd.fr">koutong@afd.fr</a>	Cotonou
17H:00	SUBMIT PRESENTATION TO USAID					
Wednesday, Aug 17	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
7h30	Review of DRAFT Presentation with Team		Dissou, Latifou, Chris, Evans, Adwoa			
9H	Patronat		Dissou, Evans			
14h00-14h45	UNICEF		Nancy, Latifou	Mme. Nadine Oké, Education Officer/Life Skills Mr. Mamadou BAH, Chief of Education Section	97 64 39 66 97 97 51 04	Cotonou
17h30	USAID to hear feedback on presentation					

Thursday, Aug 18	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
9h-12	Presentation at USAID to Mission and stakeholders					
18:30	Team Debrief and discuss assignments and plan for finalizing report					
Friday, Aug 19	Activity	Description	In Attendance	Key interviewees	Contact	Location
	Work on Report					
	Depart					

## Annex 3 : Table of Key Findings & Recommendations by Objective

KEY FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>OBJECTIVE 1: PROFILE OF YOUTH</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some parents do not perceive that school is a priority for their children; this varies in different areas and is more prevalent in rural areas.</li> <li>Parents of youth lack information to inform youth of education/training opportunities and lack funds to support them.</li> <li>There are few role models of youth in non- traditional jobs in rural communities, particularly for young women.</li> <li>Community sensitization on girls' rights (civic engagement and education) needs to be strengthened.</li> <li>Peuhl girls especially have difficulties finishing school.</li> <li>Parents' lack of monitoring their children's attendance, paying fees or buying school materials are among major reasons that youth drop out of school.</li> <li>Many youth (mostly recent drop outs) would prefer to return to school if there were means to do so.</li> <li>Youth can't access the CPQ dual apprenticeship system due to their low levels of schooling (French/Math skills).</li> <li>The fact that many youth do not have birth certificates impedes them from entering school and joining some programs.</li> <li>Young women drop out of school because of early pregnancy, lack of means to pay school fees, early marriage; expectations to help at home; low levels of French and math.</li> <li>Young rural women are only aware of a limited range of career opportunities such as tailoring and hair care.</li> <li>Youth in rural areas are interested in receiving training, but have limited understanding of what options exist, and how to find training in diversified sectors.</li> <li>Youth' access to their own farming land is not easy, particularly in certain regions.</li> <li>Out of School Youth are most interested in making quick money.</li> <li>Youth are optimistic about their future, particularly in more peri-urban areas, even though they have difficulty penetrating the job market.</li> <li>Peri-urban youth have high hopes for their futures; they want to be rich; want to have their own business, want to be the 'patron'.</li> <li>Following trainings in ateliers, youth prefer to start their own businesses rather than join others to form cooperatives, yet most youth lack the means to start businesses on their own.</li> <li>Youth graduates who complete BAC level- training at the training centers aspire to work for the government.</li> <li>Youth who have left school and are in training, often spend more time in their atelier than at home, so their "patrons"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an awareness and dissemination campaign to communicate professional training opportunities to youth</li> <li>Develop an awareness raising campaign for parents and community members on the importance of birth records for children—follow up on efforts to issue birth certificates to youth</li> <li>Consider conditional cash transfer programs (CCTs) geared toward keeping girls in school longer.</li> <li>Develop community education and skills development including health for young girls and their parents</li> <li>Develop programs using role models of young women who have done training programs or continued in schooling in order to demonstrate work options to girls with otherwise limited knowledge of options</li> </ul>



<p>serve an influential parental role.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In some rural areas, youth know of other non-farming trades but they are not doing them because they don't have access opportunities (Peuhls).</li> <li>• Some youth, including young women, are not keen to work in jobs that get them "dirty" or that are tedious (e.g. agro-processing).</li> </ul>	
<p align="center"><b>OBJECTIVE 2: PROFILE OF YSOs</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a lack of social development or cultural activities for rural youth (e.g. youth centers/ spaces; health education services, civic rights education, creative crafts, music, dance).</li> <li>• YSOs working with out of school youth have a range of programs and services- bridging math and literacy levels, PCA, artisanal training for employment; business support to market women, parent sensitization of importance of education and against forced/early marriage, work with Muslim leaders.</li> <li>• Youth Serving Organizations (YSO) are varied and include public and private initiatives and NGOs.</li> <li>• Many have small programs, with small budgets and lack a longer term vision which limits their ability to scale the programs.</li> <li>• There is little coordination among programs and no scale, particularly in alternative education (PCA).</li> <li>• Most YSOs do trainings for youth but often lack means for caring for youth (housing, "voiles" health...).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop better coordination between implementing partners in the same sectors working with the same targeted groups</li> <li>• Anticipate accompaniment programs to support and monitor youth when they begin their businesses</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>OBJECTIVE 3: Situation of EMPLOYMENT TRAINING</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is insufficient accompaniment or coaching for youth after trainings to ensure employment or success in business.</li> <li>• The training tracks for women in CQP are few.</li> <li>• In some areas of the country, access to dual training for the CQP is limited/ difficult.</li> <li>• The chances of finding training with the CQP is greater, however, many youth are still excluded from this because of the lack of funds.</li> <li>• The trades available for dual training do not appear to be very diversified: hair, sewing, mechanics, motorbike mechanics.</li> <li>• Weak or no training for tourism jobs at the CM level.</li> <li>• There is a lot of potential in the agricultural sector but youth are not being directed towards this.</li> <li>• There are many farms in the agricultural sector that could potentially offer practical internship opportunities to the youth.</li> <li>• Girls learn the following trades: hair, sewing, weaving, training centers, CETA while the boys get into mechanics, welding, agricultural center at CETA, Songhai, building and taxi-moto.</li> <li>• Programs don't teach life skills- (planning, time management), leadership and ethics to youth.</li> <li>• Lots of youth get training in trades but do not have the option of specializing in training centers.</li> <li>• The demand for the dual apprenticeship training programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop training programs for trades of agriculture, tourism and culture (confirm with Dissou if we mean in CQP and CM levels?)</li> <li>• Build on the experiences of what has worked in improving professional training, such as Swiss Contact with its support to the CQP</li> <li>• Accelerate the process of training for the CQM level and include agriculture, tourism and culture as training tracks.</li> <li>• Diversify training sectors offered in training centers that are more attractive for girls, i.e. tourism</li> <li>• Develop shorter term training cycles in the agriculture sector that are certified to benefit youth whom have dropped out or have never attended school</li> <li>• Offer "mise a niveau" or skills leveling in literacy and numeracy for youth, in order to increase their ability to qualify for the CQP</li> <li>• Develop and disseminate trainings on leadership and personal development in the PCA program, the CQP and CQM and in formal education</li> <li>• Include entrepreneurship training in training programs starting with the technical "college" level and technical high schools</li> </ul>

<p>among youth is higher than the funding capacity that is available from FODEFCA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure training and credit programs to encourage youth to collaborate with other youth to pool resources to cover costs to start their businesses.</li> <li>• Create centers or youth-friendly spaces at the commune level to assist with job placement for youth</li> <li>• Construct training centers especially in rural areas</li> <li>• Consider 'sustainable education' model as part of training centers (e.g., INA agriculture training center/Songhai) in which training centers produce services or products that can be sold to generate revenue to defray some training costs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>OBJECTIVE 4: ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION/NON-FORMAL EDUCATION OFFERINGS</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The needs in alternative basic education are huge but the activities currently impact very few youth.</li> <li>• The relation between alternative education and job placement is presently very weak.</li> <li>• There are some pilot projects, experimenting with local language and French, but not enough are doing this (issue of scale).</li> <li>• Very poor level of non formal training structures/ centers in all the communes in Benin.</li> <li>• Alternative basic education exists primarily in the form of small scale pilot programs and lacks the resources and institutional structures that other professional trainings have.</li> <li>• There is a lack of sufficient follow-up through coaching programs.</li> <li>• Practical skills training for unschooled is limited and uncertified.</li> <li>• No post –training accompaniment, but it is severely needed.</li> <li>• Professional training is not as valued by parents as non formal education is.</li> <li>• Youth go through training of first phase but are not supported for phase 2 e.g. BEAT diploma de CETA.</li> <li>• There's significant political will of the government to engage in and promote basic alternative education: various pca's, in the process of developing a curricula, needs assessments.</li> <li>• Youth lack literacy/ numeracy skills to qualify them for CQP.</li> <li>• Link between local language illiteracy and jobs is very weak (No link to practical application).</li> <li>• No one ministry has ownership of Local language illiteracy, and so there is a lack of continuity and ownership.</li> <li>• Nomadic life impedes pastoral youth from continuing education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop youth spaces in rural villages that can be used for social, education and skills development</li> <li>• Set up a pilot PCA program specifically for nomadic children</li> <li>• Supply existing training centers with equipment, and introduce a control/monitoring system</li> <li>• Include technical training to local language illiteracy projects</li> <li>• Harmonize and scale up PCAs that specifically target OSY</li> <li>• Encourage the introduction of local language literacy in specific programs</li> <li>• Contribute to making the basic education program more widespread</li> </ul>
<p><b>OBJECTIVE 5: GOVERNMENT &amp; DONOR GAPS IN TRAINING NEEDS OF YOUTH</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ministry does not have a plan for training to accompany its projects.</li> <li>• Insufficient accompaniment in different activities.</li> <li>• Lack of foresight of the need for monitoring after activities</li> <li>• Programs need to start offering training in leadership and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a coordination framework between donors, government and NGOs, for better organizing literacy and coordinating its financing</li> <li>• Consider a Partnership with the Ministry of Microfinance that would support multiple initiatives</li> <li>• Ensure government programs build in post-program</li> </ul>

<p>personal development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak support for scaling up businesses.</li> <li>• Donors include: Swiss Cooperation, World Ed, Mairies, State</li> <li>• Limited funds restrict expansion of numbers (scale issue).</li> <li>• The government is not involved enough; it is mainly donors, through NGOs, who are making progress.</li> <li>• Government does not ensure continuity/ follow up of programs after donor funding for projects end.</li> <li>• There is a lack of M and E systems.</li> <li>• Government is not active enough especially when it comes to local language illiteracy, which affects most youth.</li> <li>• Government agencies keep little or no data/statistics for monitoring or reporting.</li> <li>• There are still numerous trades that the CQP doesn't recognize.</li> <li>• Current training programs are not well linked to the job market; the private sector is poorly associated with their development.</li> <li>• Support at the commune level and with the Mairie has been instrumental to programs' successes and sustainability beyond donor funds.</li> </ul>	<p>follow up of program results and for evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to transfer skills and resources to the commune level to strengthen their capacity to play their role in youth programming</li> <li>• Government should prioritize: literacy programs, and building in coaching and accompaniment in training and entrepreneurship programs</li> <li>• There is a proliferation of trainings and youth seeking to enter this sector but it is not clear if there is sufficient demand to absorb these job seekers</li> </ul>
<p><b>OBJECTIVE 6: LABOR MARKET</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible mismatch between skills learned and the jobs available.</li> <li>• Opportunities exist in agro-processing sector</li> <li>• But it is not clear if the youth are interested in these jobs.</li> <li>• Girls have a harder time getting into the job market than males.</li> <li>• High level of informalization due to high cost to start up a business and too many bureaucratic steps to start a business</li> <li>• Limited private sector involvement in development of training curricula and job placement.</li> <li>• Food processing is key to transforming ag sector to creating job opportunities for youth.</li> <li>• YSOs are not represented in job market.</li> <li>• Youth have to search for their work after they receive training.</li> <li>• There is very little if any accessible data or analysis of the future outlook of job market for artisanal trades (service sector).</li> <li>• Motor bikes are big attractions for boys to get quick cash; they enter the sector to get cash to supplement other aspirations. This however, leads to health problems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government should focus on creating stronger economic institutions that are conducive to the expansion of the formal private sector instead of being too involved in offering short-term jobs to youth</li> <li>• Support agro-processing sector (small and large) with incentives to encourage youth to pursue this sector</li> <li>• Define and organize agriculture training tracks while putting in place coaching incentives to attract out of school youth, particularly young women</li> <li>• Continue to strengthen and foster participation of Artisan Cooperatives and other private sector involvement in the training and job placement for youth</li> <li>• Develop and disseminate professional training programs in tourism, restaurant and hotel sectors.</li> <li>• Prioritize support to training programs for agro-processing of cashews and shea butter and tourism</li> <li>• Develop market studies on artisanal sectors to analyze future outlook of job market by regions</li> </ul>

## Annex 4: Youth Focus Group Methodology & Protocol

Youth focus groups were organized to gather qualitative information about youth knowledge, attitudes and practices related to education, income generation and other social and economic issues of concern to youth. Given the study's limited time frame, it was not possible to meet with youth informants for extended periods of time or on repeated days, during which trust could be established, a key element to gaining access to truthful information about often complex personal beliefs and behaviors. Therefore, following the introductions, initial questions posed to the youth participants revolved around a symbolic figure, which was chosen and named by the youth themselves. The focus group conversation then flowed around this central figure (who was treated as possibly a fellow group member) allowing the youth participants to share personal information in a de-personalized, third-person context. The second section of the discussion then posed direct questions to youth participants about their lives and experiences.

Separate focus groups were held with male and female youth in order to maximize the participation of females and to create a non-threatening environment where each gender could identify and discuss its specific challenges. The questions were developed in French and translated by the youth evaluators and translators into local languages, depending on the location. Notes were taken in French by a second facilitator.

The focus group methodology was tested with a group of young women and young men in Porto Novo during the first week of the field work. The questions were then revised and further adapted as needed for the subsequent focus group discussions conducted throughout the field work.

### Focus Group Questions:

---

#### Salutations / introduction

##### 1. Travail/compétence

*(on part d'une image pour introduire les débats)*

1. Que peut-il faire comme travail ?
2. Comment a-t-il trouvé ce travail ?
3. Travaille-t-il à plein temps ?
4. Pourquoi est ce qu'il fait ce travail ?
5. dans quel type de structure travaille-t-il ?
6. Quelles compétences faut-il pour faire ce travail ?
7. Comment dépense-t-il cet argent ?

##### 2. Ecole & éducation & formation professionnelle

1. a-t-il-été à l'école ? si oui : jusqu'à quel niveau ? Si non : pourquoi ?
2. la personne a-t-elle fait une formation non formelle ? si oui, quel type ? et qui vous a donné cette formation ?
3. cette formation a-t-elle permis d'avoir du travail ?
4. y-t-il d'autres programmes de formation qu'elle connaît ? si oui, lesquels ?

### **3. Perspectives**

*(On revient vers les jeunes eux-mêmes pour leur poser ces questions)*

1. Qu'est-ce que vous faites dans la vie ?
2. Que voulez-vous devenir dans trois ans ?
3. qu'est-ce qu'il faut pour atteindre votre objectif?

### **4. Programme**

1. Si un partenaire veut aider la jeunesse, par où doit-il commencer ? (*probe*) En ville ou en campagne ?