



PROMOTING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN THE MINING, CONSTRUCTION AND AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN LIBERIA

Context

Liberia has made significant progress in its efforts to secure and sustain long-lasting peace. As a result of the devastating civil wars, vocational infrastructure critical to rebuilding the country has been left severely damaged. The country faces significant threats from increasing youth unemployment and a growing influx of returnees to the country. Simultaneously, Liberia is attracting significant foreign investment in key industrial sectors, which include mining, energy, road construction, agriculture and forestry. The lack of quality vocational education and well-trained technical personnel present a significant barrier for Liberians to take advantage of the employment opportunities created. This creates a risk that threatens the long-term stability of the country.

The project aims to address the above constraints by upgrading Liberia's training infrastructure to modern industry needs that will enable vulnerable groups, particularly youth, to benefit from the employment opportunities generated. In cooperation with Komatsu, heavy equipment and machinery is at the core of the current industrial development in the country. A modern facility will be established to provide hands-on and classroom based learning using modern curriculum developed by Komatsu. This training center will prepare students for future careers in the operation and maintenance of heavy equipment, which is presently in high-demand across all sectors.

Scope of intervention

The project will provide visible impact for the youth, unemployed and unskilled workers with marketable skills to effectively compete for jobs created in industry. An inclusive and cohesive relationship between the partners will be developed as a key driver for success and for the long-term sustainability of the project.

Innovative features

The project has been closely implemented by a private sector partner, Komatsu, which will transfer knowledge on industry best practice to ensure the delivery of training meets the requirements for servicing and operating modern heavy equipment. Following Komatsu training in Japan, the Booker Washington Institute instructors will play a critical role in assuring the quality of the training courses and to ensure graduates have achieved a level of competence suitable to gain employment in the industry.



Prospect for up-scaling

Despite fast economic growth in many parts of the developing world, unemployment prevails and human resource development is largely neglected. While the population is growing and the number of people reaching working age is increasing, many developing countries suffer severely from a deficit of marketable skills that plagues the operation and productivity of industrial sectors.

A way to overcome this challenge is to involve the private sector in the design and implementation of skills training courses, as was done in this Public Private Development Partnership (PPDP) projects with Komatsu. Such a PPDP approach has great potential for up-scaling in other similar initiatives in Liberia and elsewhere.

At a Glance

- TITLE:** Promoting youth employment in the mining, construction and agriculture sector
- GOAL:** to contribute to the national Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy aimed at revitalizing the economy (Pillar II) in the sectors of agriculture, forestry, mining manufacturing and services
- DONOR:** Government of Japan
- PARTNERS:** Komatsu Ltd, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Booker Washington Institute
- BUDGET:** USD 1,4 million
- PROJECT STATUS:** ongoing
- DURATION:** May 2013 – August 2014