

Group of Twenty

Increasing participation rates of women in employment to address the jobless growth phenomenon



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Issue:	Increasing participation rates of women in employment to address the jobless growth phenomenon
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Introduction

The “jobless growth” phenomenon, is a phenomenon in which a country’s economy will grow, however will be accompanied by an inadequate growth in that same country’s work force (and employment). The jobless growth phenomenon has appeared in recent years in countries recovering from economic despair - mainly in South-East Asia (in countries like China, Cambodia and Thailand) and some parts of Africa.

This problem poses a worrying threat to not only these nation’s economy and to their social standards (i.e. the amount of unemployed people, and the effect of unemployment on those people’s lives), but to the global one as well. And with the growing threat of the jobless growth phenomenon, a new predicament arises: with job employment become scarce, the unemployment of women in particular (in these nations) is growing drastically. Delegates should not only aim to address the issue of jobless growth, but should think how they can address the issue of the divided demographic.

What is meant by the divided demographic in this context is, seeing as women in particular are bearing the brunt of unemployment in the countries affected by jobless growth, that the effects of such a phenomenon are creating a divide between genders. More specifically the jobless growth phenomenon is posing a degrading threat to women’s social status in the workforce (i.e. employment is favouring men, rather than women, especially regarding the quality of jobs) of these countries, and furthermore the world...

Definition of Key Terms

Capital Intensive Economy



A capital intensive economy is an economy which is dependent on the production of a particular good, or service. For example a capital intensive economy can be dependent on the production of oil, or telecommunications.

Import-Substitution Economy

Import-substitution is an economic policy which favours domestic production of goods, as opposed to foreign imports (hence the name import-substitution).

Jobless Growth Phenomenon

The jobless growth phenomenon (as mentioned above) is when a country's economy grows, but is not paralleled by adequate growth in employment (i.e.: Underemployment)

Labour Intensive Economy

A labour intensive economy is (as the name suggests) an economy which is highly reliant on manual labour. Economies such as these usually have a high demand for workers (although the workers are usually poorly treated - economically and socially - by their employers).

Sector

A distinct part of a nation's economy (*Dictionary*). For example the private sector refers to independent businesses.

Underemployment

Underemployment is the insufficient employment of a workforce adequately sized to address jobless growth (i.e.: poverty).

General Overview

Countries Affected

Following a report submitted by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the countries affected the most by jobless growth (in South-East Asia) are: Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Additionally, following an interview with the International Labour Organization (ILO) regional director for Africa (Aeneas Chuma), it was revealed that sub-Saharan Africa is most affected by job unemployment and the

jobless growth phenomenon. One country in South-East Asia who is seems exempt from the phenomenon is Malaysia.

The Causes of the Phenomenon

The previously mentioned report attributed the cause of this phenomenon to 3 factors; however it should also be noted that the UNDP also stressed the fact that it felt more research needed to be done before coming to any concrete conclusions (perhaps a good starting point to consider when creating a resolution).

The first reason was attributed towards country's shift from more inward, import-substitution based economies towards ones which are more globally integrated and competitive. Effectively countries are globalizing at the expense of their work force: The worker's function becomes superfluous, when the country begins to become more reliant on foreign imports and a foreign work force.

The second reason is attributed to countries shifting from a labour intensive economy to a capital intensive economy. This is somewhat similar to the source above: in effect, due to the macro-economic policies of the country changing, the infrastructure of the nation's economy becomes much more dependent on foreign work forces, and foreign trade in general. As a result, the amount of labourers in certain sectors is no longer needed (as economic infrastructures change), and only some workers might get reallocated to different jobs - although, this too, is unlikely seeing as different skills are required for different kinds of jobs (skills which the labourers might not have).

The third reason is simply attributed to generally bad, unsustainable, economic infrastructures and policies - which is quite general, and is considered a main source of the phenomenon (although it is also something that is definitely relevant to address).

These are only three reasons which the UNDP has listed, however other organizations and specialists argue that there are more (which will be discussed later). It is also important to recognize that, each country affected by the jobless growth phenomenon is not necessarily affected by all three of the factors above (perhaps only one or two of them).

Divided Demographic

As mentioned above, in addition to the three reasons listed by the UNDP's report, several other organizations like the ILO and other committees like the African Union Commission (AUC) have come up of several other potential sources for the issue, which pertain more specifically to the demographics of each country.



Another source attributed job loss, yet a growing economy to the increase in both abundance and quality of technology (naturally). With the creation of new, efficient machinery (useful to industries) the size of work forces can be drastically reduced - which is both good in terms of efficiency, but devastating to levels of employment in said country. This posits a logical explanation (in addition to the ones above).

Additionally, In India for example, the shift to a capital intensive economy along with some social changes and reforms (India is now becoming renowned for its telecommunications industry), has led to a divided demographic. The change in policy has left the demand in previous jobs devoid, and has created a demand for a skill set - which not that many employees have. This raises the issue of more-utile education. Both African and South-East Asian nations are calling for educational reforms which will produce a workforce which is more competent and capable of addressing the new skills required. However, the immediate effect of this is drastic declines in employment. Furthermore, social reforms, like more women having access to (better) education, in this countries, has led to a growing amount of unemployed women in the workforce. This is exacerbated by the fact that in a lot of these countries the priority for employment favours men. The situation differs in a lot of African countries, because not only is there a demographic divided between the genders, however there is also a demographic divide between the youth and the senior. This again is attributed to education which isn't as job specific as it should be, but also to a general lack of decent jobs.

The effect of the above is that the jobless growth phenomenon has encumbered these nation's attainment towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): more specifically the eradication of extreme hunger and poverty and promotion of gender equality. Additionally the presence of this phenomenon hints out the unsustainable nature of these countries' economy - which poses a future threat to global prosperity.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

The UNDP has worked specifically with all the nations involved in this issue, so that they can strive to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (which is the purpose of the UNDP), and has also produced several statistical reports on the nature of these countries' progress.

India



Although several of the nations mentioned above are relevant to this issue, India has demonstrated a more relevant problem which pertains to the aspect of the issue which we are trying to deal with: the divided demographic. The augmentation of unemployment in the male workforce has only been surpassed by that in the woman workforce, and the inequality of such should be addressed.

Malaysia

As mentioned above, Malaysia is one of the only countries in South-East Asia which is exempt from the phenomenon. The UNDP's report states that "Malaysia is the only country which didn't experience inadequate job employment", however it did not state why (something the delegates can look into).

The International Labour Organization (ILO)

The ILO has dedicated itself to improving international labour standards, and has worked with several other organizations to ensure that equality, social security and economic sustainability are at the heart of every economic infrastructure.

The African Union Commission (AUC)

The AUC has worked with the ILO in an effort to achieve the previously mentioned for countries affected by jobless growth in Africa.

Timeline of Events

Due to the nature of the issue, and the fact that it is more of a prevalent phenomenon than a recordable event, there is only a basic relevant timeline available:

Date	Description of event
February 1st, 1919	International Labour Organization created (as a result of the treaty of Versailles).
January 1st, 1996	The United Nations Development Programme was established (in the United States).
May 26th, 2001	African Union (Commission) established (in Addis Ababa).

UN involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events



There have been no relevant UN treaties, although as mentioned above, the UNDP/ ILO have created several “jobless growth” reports:

- *Outcome document of the regional consultations on the post-2015 development agenda*. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, AUC, AfDB and UNDP - 2013.
- *Rethinking economic growth: Towards Productive and Inclusive Arab Societies*. IMF, UNDP - 2012.October
- *Global Employment Trends*. ILO - 2014

Unfortunately a 52 page report submitted by the UNDP analysing jobless growth, is no longer accessible. However, on the ILO’s website they concisely analyse the main points of the document, and it will serve as an incredibly useful tool (see appendix).

Similarly the AUC interview has produced information on how African governments plan on addressing and how they are affected by the issue. A useful article online submitted by the UN- associated- company “Africa Renewal” encompasses an interview with the African regional director for the ILO (see appendix).

Possible Solutions

In order to effectively tackle this problem you have to consider the different origins of the issue itself - which have been discussed above. By which implies that delegates should aim to address not only the weak economic policies and infrastructures which certain countries have, but should also address the issue of a divided demographic, gender inequities and educational reforms.

In order to address the mentioned above, delegates should encourage countries to resort back to (a certain extent) their previous economies, and should encourage domestic investment with the same zeal that they do foreign. The effect of this will be a more self-sufficient economy, and will also reintroduce more job opportunities. Delegates should also aim to address the issue of creating educational infrastructures which prepare the youth with the skills they will require in future jobs (in the new sectors that have been introduced). Measures should also be implemented which improve gender equality, and a large part of gender equality reforms, can start with equal education, and more employment opportunities for women. Finally, an important thing for delegates to note is that there different kinds of solutions: short term and long term solutions. Listed above are several long term solutions, however delegates should also aim to address the short term problems which the



phenomenon imposes: poverty and homelessness in ex-labourers. An example of a short term solution is creating facilities which temporarily tend to the homeless and the poor, so as to provide shelter for them, whilst they rehabilitate (i.e.: search for new jobs, or have the government provide them with new ones).

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Appendices

Appendix I

ILO's analysis of UNDP document can be found on this link:

http://www.ilo.org/asia/info/public/pr/WCMS_BK_PR_171_EN/lang--en/index.htm

Appendix II

Interview with Aeneas Chuma and Africa Renewal Organization:

<http://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/april-2015/africa-grapples-jobless-growth>