

IDS Bulletin

Transforming Development Knowledge

Volume 49 | Number 5 | November 2018

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN AFRICA

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Notes on Contributors	iii
Clementina Oluwafunke Ajayi In Memoriam	vii
Introduction: Youth Employment and the Private Sector in Africa Seife Ayele, Marjoke Oosterom and Dominic Glover	1
Ethiopia's Agricultural Transformation: Agribusiness' Contribution to Reducing Youth Unemployment Tesfamicheal Wossen and Seife Ayele	15
Labour Casualisation and Youth Employment in Ghana's Formal Private Sector Gertrude Dzifa Torvikey	31
Uganda's National Youth Policy and Job Creation for Youth Rita Makumbi	45
Skills Gaps and Mismatches: Private Sector Expectations of Engineering Graduates in Ethiopia Jerusalem Yibeltal Yizengaw	55
Fostering Agribusiness Entrepreneurship for Kenyan Youth through Practice-Based Education John Muchira	71
Navigating Precarious Livelihoods: Youth in the SME Sector in Zimbabwe Simbarashe Gukurume	89
Assessing the Effectiveness of Employment Programmes for Ex-Combatants: A Case Study of Nigeria's Post Amnesty Programme (PAP) Tarila Marclint Ebiede	105
Glossary	119

Clementina Oluwafunke Ajayi In Memoriam

Clementina Oluwafunke Ajayi was a Matasa Fellow of our second cohort, selected in December 2017 alongside seven other talented young African scholars from a competitive field of nearly 200 applicants.

Clementina was working as the Coordinator of the Agropreneurial Laboratory, and was a staff member of the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria (FUTA). She was completing her PhD thesis on Food Insecurity Transitions among Rural Households in Nigeria.

Before embarking on her PhD studies, Clementina worked for nine years in the banking sector, where she could have pursued a successful and remunerative professional career. She decided to take a different direction.

Clementina greatly impressed the Matasa selectors with the clarity and coherence of her application, her compassion for the young Nigerians with whom she worked, and her commitment to work hard for the sustainable development of her country and all Africans.

Clementina's Matasa article was to be about the potential of Nigeria's poultry sector to create jobs for young people and stimulate private sector growth.

Clementina Ajayi died from complications during childbirth on 10 May 2018. She was buried in her home town, Ife. Her baby, a son, survived.

Messages of condolence received from members of the Matasa 2 cohort spoke warmly about their new friend Clementina, as well as their shock and sadness at losing her companionship part way through the Matasa journey. The messages celebrated and mourned the loss of Clementina's energy, enthusiasm, intelligence, determination, diligence, kindness, and lively humour.

On behalf of everyone involved in the Matasa Fellows Network, we offer our sincere condolences to Clementina's husband and family.

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