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SOCIAL PROTECTION | POLICY BRIEF

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Improving Opportunities for Youth with Subsidized Dual Apprenticeships in Côte d'Ivoire



In sub-Saharan Africa, wage jobs are rare, and a vast majority of young people are engaged in low-productivity occupations. Many governments attempt to upgrade traditional apprenticeships to help improve youth opportunities for productive employment. There is limited evidence on the direct and indirect effects of these formal apprenticeships. This study evaluated the impacts of an apprenticeship program subsidizing formal apprentices placed in firms and offering them theoretical training.

Key Findings

Overall, the subsidized dual apprenticeship program successfully expanded youth access to apprenticeship and the number of apprenticeship positions in firms during the program. In parallel, it increased youth earnings and skills four years after the start of the evaluation.

During the program, 20 months after apprentices were placed in firms:

- The program fostered human capital investments among youth. While youth in the program increased participation in formal apprenticeships, they decreased participation in traditional apprenticeships. The net effect was still positive and youth participation in apprenticeship strongly increased.
- Participating firms had more apprentices compared to the comparison group. While firms where formal apprentices were placed hired fewer traditional apprentices, this substitution effect was relatively small. In the end, there were 0.74 to 0.77 net new apprenticeship positions created per subsidized apprentice.

Firms who hosted formal apprentices saw an increase in the number of days worked by apprentices compared to comparison firms. The value of the work performed by apprentices also strongly increased. However, there was no impact on firm profits and revenues.

Four years after the evaluation started, 18-24 months after the program ended:

- Youth who participated in the program had a 15 percent increase in earnings.
- The average increase in earnings is consistent with gains in productivity—youth were engaged in more complex tasks, including non-routine abstract tasks, a sign that they were able to improve their human capital and technical skills.
- More youth obtained certification, which suggests that part of the skills acquired were general and transferable.

RESEARCHERS

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PARTNERS

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COUNTRY

Côte d'Ivoire

TIMELINE

2014 - 2018

STUDY SAMPLE

1,840 youth, 791 firms

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