

**TRADES UNION CONGRESS (GHANA)**



**POLICY PAPER  
ON THE STATE OF YOUNG  
WORKERS IN TRADE  
UNIONS**



**November 2023**

# PREFACE

The Trade Union Congress (Ghana) – hereafter, TUC (Ghana) – recognises the significance of mobilising the youth (defined to include persons in the 18-35 age cohort) and has established structures for organising young workers. We have a Youth Desk and a National Youth Council (NYC) that give young workers spaces in our decision-making structures. Our Congress Policy Statement and Resolutions (2021-2024) identifies ‘the doubts in the minds of young workers and new labour market entrants about the relevance of trade unions’, and points to the need to prioritise unionisation and protection of vulnerable groups in the labour force, including young workers.

In spite of the above, representation of the youth in trade unions is limited. Not all of the member unions of the TUC (Ghana) have functioning youth structures. Our youth structures in the regions and districts are not working as anticipated. There are also simmering intergenerational issues and contestations in our trade unions. These issues need to be address so that we can attract young workers and sustain their interests in unions. We must also find new ways to improve participation of

young workers in trade unions activities.

This policy paper provides the blueprint for the realisation of the youth objectives of the TUC (Ghana). We expect our member unions to use it to review their programmes on mobilisation of the youth.

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**Dr. Anthony Yaw Baah**  
*Secretary General of TUC (Ghana)*  
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy paper seeks to promote mobilisation of the youth in the trade union movement in Ghana. It highlights situation of the youth in the TUC (Ghana) and the structural arrangements that exist to promote the inclusion of young workers. It sheds light on the Youth Desk and the National Youth Council (NYC), and analyses representation of youth in trade union decision-making structures. These insights provide the basis for the youth policy options for the trade union movement in Ghana, namely, 1) advocacy on national education and training policies and creation of quality jobs for the youth, and 2) adoption of new strategies and practices for recruitment of young people into trade unions.

The overall goal of this policy is to encourage more youth to join trade unions, sustain the interests of the youth in trade unions, and to promote active participation of young workers in unions. The specific objectives are to:

- i. achieve effective participation of the youth in trade union activities;
- ii. achieve 30 percent participation of youth in trade union activities;

- iii. increase the number of the youth in the member unions of the TUC (Ghana);
- iv. increase the involvement of the youth in leadership of trade unions;
- v. promote education and training of young workers;
- vi. ensure active involvement of the youth who transition from youth structures;
- vii. create strong networks with tertiary students, national service personnel, and other youth groups; and
- viii. support national youth employment and development programmes.

This policy paper provides the institutional framework for the realisation of the above objectives i.e., implementation, coordination, and evaluation. It specifies that the TUC (Ghana) and its member unions shall develop annual action plans out of this policy and integrate them into union plans and budgets. The NYC, Youth Desk, and the Organising Department shall oversee the implementation of this policy. The implementation of this policy paper shall be subjected to the TUC (Ghana)'s system for monitoring policies and resolutions.

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
DCL	District Council of Labour
ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
EU	European Union
GEA	Ghana Employers' Association
GWU	General Workers' Union
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IT	Information Technology
MCAST	Malta College of Arts Science and Technology
NYC	National Youth Council
LO- Norway	Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions
RCL	Regional Councils of Labour
RYC	Regional Youth Council
TUC (Ghana)	Trade Union Congress (Ghana)
UK	United Kingdom
ZiCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions





# **TRADES UNION CONGRESS [GHANA]**

## **VISION STATEMENT**

**To be among the best Labour  
Organisations in Africa**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**To Unite all Workers of  
Ghana into an Independent and  
Democratic Organisation for  
Improved Working and Living  
Conditions through Collective  
Action, Solidarity and Social  
Partnership based on the Principle  
of Fairness and Justice**

## **MOTTO**

*The United Family of Workers'  
by Hand and by Brain all over Ghana*



# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## 1.0 Introduction

This policy paper provides guidelines for mobilisation and participation of the youth in trade unions in Ghana. It emerged out of a participatory process within the TUC (Ghana) –, and specifies policy options for unionisation of young workers and sustaining their interests in unions. The ideas in this paper come from narratives of key informants – two former and two serving officers of the National Youth Council (NYC) and the Youth Desk of the TUC (Ghana) –, trade union reports and documents, and literature on best practices around the world. This policy paper stresses on the imperatives of 1) trade union advocacy on national education and training policies and creation of quality jobs for the youth and 2) adopting innovative strategies and practices that enable recruitment of young workers into unions. The policy goal, key objectives, and strategic actions are anchored on two of the key tenets of mobilisation.

## 1.1 Mobilisation

There is no doubt that ‘for unions to be relevant in the future, they need to be relevant to young workers now. Young workers are more than tomorrow’s members, they are part of today’s fight (Wales TUC, 2020: 2). Growing decent work deficits among the youth and declining union density

make a strong case for young workers be put at the heart of trade union mobilization.

Mobilisation transforms individual workers into collective actors disposed to, and capable of, creating and sustaining collective organisation and collective action (Kelly, 2019). Trade unions can build and grow by engaging with young workers with compelling offers, and in a language that resonates with such workers (Wales TUC, 2020: 2). Effective mobilisation involves building interest and organisation (Martin 1999). Together, these two elements of mobilisation enables trade unions to connect the deplorable labour market situation of the youth and the *raison d’être* of trade unions, i.e., the protection and promotion of the rights and interests of workers.

Building interest involves enabling ‘individuals [to] acquire a sense of injustice (the conviction that a situation is “wrong” or “illegitimate”) and how this grievance becomes collectivised’ (Holgate et. al. 2018: 607). This means transition from dissatisfaction to injustice. It requires the recognition that workers’ interests are opposed to those of employers (Darlington, 2018: 3). In addition, there is a need for a conversion of injustice into collective interest through attribution and social

identification (Kelly, 1998: 29-30). Attribution involves blaming employers for injustice (Holgate et. al. 2018: 607) or consigning grievances to employer actions (Darlington, 2018: 3). In contrast, social identification generates a feeling of being part of a distinct group in opposition to an outgroup (Holgate et. al. 2018: 607). It involves the rise of sentiments of “us” against “others” who have different interests and values (Kelly, 1998: 29-30).

Organisation is necessary in the utilisation of the resources of trade unions, including young members. This element of trade union mobilisation engenders group inclusiveness, ensuring that the group comes close to absorbing the lives of its members (Tilly 1978: 64). Organisation determines how group members relate to the group, and the level of interaction or the density of social network among members in influencing collective organisation and action (Kelly, 1998: 37). Inclusiveness in organisation is a function of the time and the ~~energy that group members spend in~~ social interaction among themselves (Tilly 1978: 64). There is also a structural element in organisation. The

structure of a group such as centralisation of power and scope of representation affect a group’s capacity for collective action (Kelly, 1998: 25). Organisation is important in the efficiency and effectiveness of collective actions (Tilly 1978: 64), and relates to union size and density, and other structural properties such as shop steward-member ratio, and union decision-making structures (Kelly, 1998: 37).

Arguably, the current situation of the youth in the trade union movement cannot be separated from the (in)ability to transform young workers into collective actors through building interest –attributing injustice to employers actions–, and ensuring inclusiveness. Thus, this policy paper proposes the adoption of mobilisation approach to encourage more young workers to join trade unions, sustain the interests of the youth in unions, and to promote active participation of young workers in trade unions in Ghana. It maintains that focusing on building interest and organisation are imperatives in the mobilisation of youth in trade unions in Ghana.





## SECTION 2: THE POLICY CONTEXT: THE YOUTH IN THE TUC (GHANA)

### 2.1 Introduction

The TUC (Ghana) and its member unions have made important strides in organising young workers in the last two decades. These strides have manifested in the establishment of structures and adoption of policies and constitutional provisions to enhance the involvement of the youth. Notably, the TUC (Ghana) has created a Youth Desk and the NYC that enable representation of the youth in the decision-making bodies of the union. In its Congress Policy Statement and Resolutions (2021-2024), the TUC (Ghana) has committed to adopt new strategies for organizing workers in atypical forms of employment, paying special attention to young workers and others in vulnerable employment. Similarly, the 2016-2020 Youth Policy of the TUC (Ghana) sought 'to encourage more youth to join the trade union movement and to promote their active participation in unions at all levels' (See 2016-2020 Policies). A number of the member unions of the TUC (Ghana) have made similar legal and institutional arrangements for the inclusion of the youth.

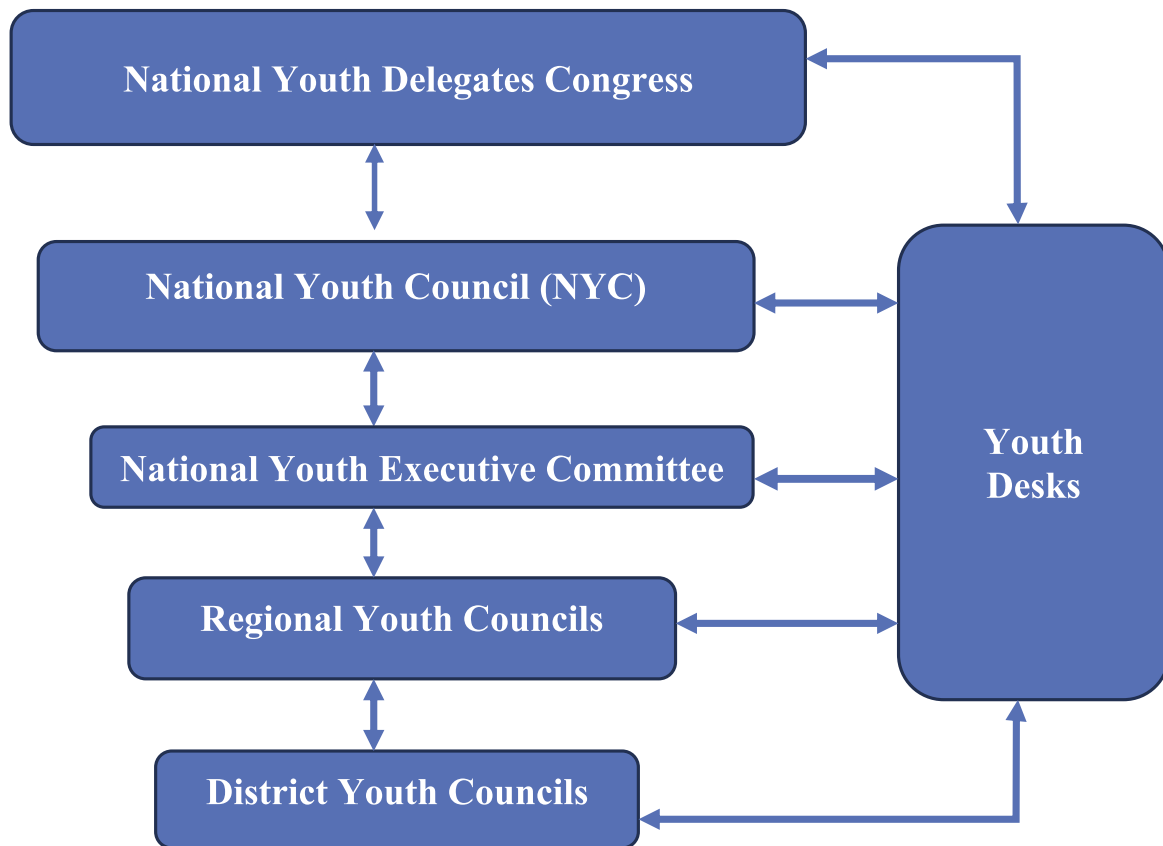
The programme to enhance the participation of the youth in trade unions is remarkable in two main ways. First, at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there were no significant youth structures, policies, and constitutional

provisions. The TUC (Ghana) turned the corner by September 2012, having created a Youth Desk and the NYC, adopted a Youth Policy and Constitutional provisions, and organised a National Youth Delegates Congress. Second, the establishment of the Youth Desk and the implementation of youth programmes brought some improvement in the participation of youth in unions (See 2016-2020 Policies). The 'youth are more visible now compare with when there were no established youth structures in the unions. It is evident that the [youth] structures are doing well. We have individuals coming from the youth structures to take positions like General Secretaries and Regional Secretaries' (interview # 2, former Youth Desk Officer, 2023). A recent membership survey revealed that about 40 percent of the members of eight affiliates of the TUC (Ghana) are youth. These outcomes show the importance of trade union mobilisation of young workers.

### 2.2 Youth Structures in Trade unions

The TUC (Ghana) has established constitutional structures that enhance youth involvements in trade unions. These structures have both national and sub-national presence that enable the voices of the youth to be heard in trade unions.

## Youth Structures



### 2.2.1 Youth Desks

Youth Desks are the focal points for trade union organising of young workers in Ghana. The Youth Desk of the TUC (Ghana) implements the union's youth policies and programmes. It also coordinates and promotes the activities of the youth structures of the TUC (Ghana). The Youth Desk Officer attends structural meetings of the TUC (Ghana).

### 2.2.2 National Youth Council (NYC)

The National Youth Council is the umbrella body of the youth structures within the TUC (Ghana). The NYC champions the integration and participation of young workers in the ac-

tivities of the TUC (Ghana) and its member unions. It also provides a platform for the promotion of the interest of young workers. The structures of the NYC include the National Youth Delegates Congress (the highest decision-making body), the National Youth Council (the second highest decision-making body), and the National Youth Executive Committee. Among other functions, the National Youth Executive Committee has the mandate to initiate youth policies and projects. The 'leaders in the youth structures serve as liaison between younger members and the union leadership and ensure that the perspectives of the youths are con-

sidered in decision-making' (interview #1, former officer of the NYC, 2023)

Over the years, the NYC has been involved in activities that showcase young workers in the TUC (Ghana). It celebrates the International Youth Day annually, using the occasion to mobilise resources to make donations to vulnerable groups in the country. The NYC also engages with tertiary students and national service persons in Ghana. It also participates in international youth exchange programmes, such as the summer patrol organised by the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO- Norway). These activities improve the visibility of young workers in trade unions, providing incentives for others to join the unions.

### **2.2.3 Regional and District Youth Councils**

The Constitution and Internal Regulations of the TUC (Ghana) provides for sub-national youth structures: Regional Youth Councils (RYC) and District Youth Councils (DYC). Regional Youth Councils are part of the Regional Councils of Labour (RCL) of the TUC (Ghana). Their functions include promoting active participation of the youth in union activities in the regions. The District Youth Councils (DYC) are part of the District Councils of Labour (DCL) and are mandated to enhance active participation of the youth in trade union activities in the districts.

### **2.2.4 Representation of youth in trade union decision-making structures**

The youth structures enable participation of young workers in trade unions. The NYC ensures youth representation in national decision-making structures of the TUC (Ghana). The chairperson of the NYC is a member of the General Council (the second highest decision-making body) of the TUC (Ghana). The Youth Desk Officer attends Steering Committee meetings as an ex-officio member. In addition, the Constitution and Internal Regulations of the TUC (Ghana) requires that not less than 20 percent of delegates of member unions to the Delegates Congress of the TUC (Ghana) should be youth. These constitutional arrangements are significant, creating spaces for young workers in national structures of trade unions.

In addition, young workers are represented at decision-making structures of the TUC (Ghana) in the administrative regions and districts of Ghana. The Constitution and Internal Regulations of the TUC (Ghana) requires that the RCL to involve one representative of each of the DYC and RYC. The rules also require that one of the executive members of the RCL shall be a youth. The youth are also represented at the DCL. Chairpersons and secretaries of local/branch youth committees of member unions in districts and officers of the RYC resident in the Dis-

trict are members of the DLC. The Constitution and Internal Regulations of the TUC (Ghana) also require that at least one officer of the Executive Committee of the DCL should be a youth.

The youth structures and provisions provide significant opportunity for mobilisation of youth in the TUC (Ghana). The framework for the representation of youth in both the national and sub-national structures of the TUC (Ghana) are adequate, creating spaces for the youth to 1) engage themselves through their own structures and 2) articulate their issues through the structures of the TUC (Ghana).

### 2.3 Performance of Youth Structures

The above notwithstanding, youth participation in trade unions is limited by many factors. First, not all the member unions the TUC (Ghana) have youth structures. Although the 'TUC (Ghana) and other affiliate unions have established youth structures, we still have some unions that are hesitant. It will be good to have all unions complete the youth structure formation and mainstream them properly into the union activities' (interview #1, former officer of the NYC, 2023). Arguably, the dearth of youth structures in some unions means limited representation of young workers. It is therefore, important for the TUC

(Ghana) and the NYC to engage with national unions that do not have such structures on creation and integration of youth structures.

Second, youth structures in trade unions are bedevilled by financial constraints. 'In some unions, the formation of the youth structures is becoming a norm ... the structures will be there but would not function properly. This is because there are no budgetary allocations for the structures' (interview # 2, former Youth Desk Officer, 2023). In some cases, youth activities are significantly donor-driven, ceasing when projects and donor funds end.

Intergenerational issues and contestations also limit the creation of spaces for young workers in trade unions. Key informants broached that some unions have not created enough room for the youth to operate because of scepticism about the abilities and experiences of the youth. 'Older union leaders who perceive young activists as inexperienced may not take the ideas of the youth seriously' (interview #1, former officer of the NYC, 2023). According to a pioneer youth activist of the TUC (Ghana), 'during my time in the youth structures, and even now, I come across leaders who do not want to give young people the chance to participate fully in union activities because of the perceptions

## Performance of Youth Structures

that the youth are inexperienced or too aggressive in their approach' (interview # 2, former Youth Desk Officer, 2023).

Another intergenerational issue that bedevil involvements of the youth in some unions is political contestation. One of the young activists that participated in the development of the youth structures of the TUC (Ghana) decries that 'some form of friction happens between the old generation and the new crop of young people coming in[to] union structures because of the vigour and ambitions of young people. This sometimes lead to misunderstanding between them and the older generation' (interview #1, former officer of the NYC, 2023). In some cases, 'you find some unionists at the top [of union structures] feeling threatened by the energy the youth are coming with and so do not want to give them the opportunity that will put them in the spotlight (interview # 2, former Youth Desk Officer, 2023).

These intergenerational issues and contestations have implications for the transition of young activists from the youth structures to main trade union structures. Activists who pass the age of 35 years leave the youth structures. Yet, there are no 'clear pathway one will have to follow to be integrated into mainstream trade

union activities after exiting the [youth] structures' (interview #3, current officer of the NYC, 2023). In some cases, even though the 'youth structure serves as opportunity for young people to be integrated into core union structures ... another

challenge is how young people who are transitioning [from the youth structure] get along with the generation of unionists ahead of them (interview #1, former officer of the NYC, 2023). In such situations, transition from youth structures to the

core trade union structures 'becomes a bit tricky because sometimes there exist some differences in perspectives due to the age differences' (interview #1, former officer of the NYC, 2023). Youth activists who are unable to transition do not have significant spaces in their unions despite the resources that might have gone into building their capacity. In the end, the unions loose such potential.

## **Best practices around the world**

### **2.4 Best practices around the world**

Trade unions around the world have been involved in activities to promote the rights and interest of young workers. These endeavours can be categorised into two: organising young workers and improving the labour market outcomes of the youth.



### 2.4.1 Organising the Youth

The literature shows that notable and effective ways of organising of the youth involve mobilisation around issues that affect young workers (Wales TUC, 2020; International Labour Organisation (ILO, n.d.). Unions build the interest of the youth –creating a sense of injustice and making grievance collectivised (Holgate et. al. 2018: 607)– and make young workers feel included in unions (Tilly 1978: 64) by paying attention to their issues and challenges, and finding innovative ways to articulate and address such.

There are notable examples of how trade unions have gone about organising the young workers. One of the ways by which trade unions connect with young workers is improving communication. The Wales TUC has developed a Young Workers' Toolkit that promotes active engagement and communicating between unions and young workers, and gives young workers the platform to speak for themselves (Wales TUC, 2020). In Benin, unions utilise the theatre for development approach to provide education on trade unionism, health, and rights (ILO, n.d.: 7). The Private Schools and Employees Union of Malawi used online platforms and a radio programme to organize new members (Chinguwo, 2022: 16). A union in Brazil entered into an agreement with a radio station in organising meetings with students, sensitising students on the dangers of drugs and violence, and offering a

live concert on the campus (ILO, n.d.: 11).

In addition to improving communication between unions and young workers, creation of youth organisations and alliances with youth groups are important ways to organise young workers. These organisations and collaborations enable campaigns and services that fit the needs of the youth and atypical workers. The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZiCTU) has developed youth structures that enable representation of young workers at the National Executives of the union (Chinguwo, 2022: 26). Top union leaders –a former President, and the current President and Second Vice-President of the ZiCTU– passed through the youth structures (ibid.). In 2015, the Dutch Federation of Trade Unions worked with youth organizations in the “Young & United” campaign that reached dispersed young workforce, successfully set political agenda, and brought about partial abolishment of the youth minimum wage (Vandaele, 2018: 675-676). The German Confederation of Trade Unions (DGB) has established the DGB Youth program, which among utilizes digital platforms and social media channels to communicate and mobilize young workers. They share relevant information, news, and success stories, creating awareness and encouraging participation.



The foregoing show that effective mobilisation of the youth goes beyond application of traditional organising strategies. The usual “bread and butter” organising campaigns are no longer fits for purpose. Unions need to identify the peculiar issues of young workers and fashion their organising strategies towards addressing such issues.

### 2.4.2 Improving labour market outcomes.

Young workers face dire labour market outcomes. Africa has over 140 million unemployed youth (World Economic Forum, 2021). In Ghana, about 625,000 persons in the 15-35 age cohort were unemployed in 2017 (Baah-Boateng, n.d.:3). It is said that youth unemployment is a major socioeconomic challenge and security threat to the country (Baah-Boateng, n.d.:3).

Trade union involvement in youth employment promotion is important for many reasons. Such action is beneficial to young workers and trade unions. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) identifies that trade unions can 1) facilitate school-to-work transitions through the provision professional skills and market knowledge that enhance employment opportunities, 2) promote social dialogue and stakeholder engagement on youth employment,

and 3) ensure social protection and adequate working conditions among young workers (Visionary Analytics, 2018: 15). Trade union campaign on youth employment enhances the appeal of unions, making them attractive to young workers and adding the number of potential union members.

Trade unions around the world have been involved in improving employability of young workers in many ways. Trade union efforts to enhance labour market outcomes of

young workers have included skills and capacity development programme. The General Workers' Union (GWU) in Malta has been involved in apprentice-training, issuing calls for applications

## Improving labour market outcomes.

through the Malta College of Arts Science and Technology (MCAST) and selecting apprentices to pursue training in administrative and secretarial studies (Visionary Analytics, 2018: 33). Trainees of this programme visit the offices of the GWU, attend events of the union, and help in organising conferences and meetings which enable them to build a portfolio and gain work experience (ibid.). Apprenticeships have been one of the dominant and most successful channels for organising young workers in Germany (Vandaele, 2018: 673). In the United Kingdom (UK), there is the Wales Union Learning Fund (financed Welsh Government) that enables

trade unions to pay for learning and skills development in information technology (IT), literacy and numeracy, technical skills and mental health awareness and support (Wales TUC, 2020: 33).

The efforts of trade unions to promote labour market outcomes of young workers have also manifest in job search support. In Spain, the youth committee of a union published a guide on techniques for searching and finding jobs (ILO, n.d.: 4). This guide also points young workers to vocational training centres and provides overview of workers' rights and trade unions services (ibid.), serving as useful tool for unionisation of young workers. Union-managed voluntary unemployment insurance schemes provides incentives for unionisation of young workers in Denmark, Finland, and Sweden (Vandaele, 2018: 672).

In addition to direct skills development and job search assistance, trade unions promote youth employment through advocacy. In the Northern Europe, involvements of trade unions in income support schemes and active labour market policies increase the exposure of young workers to trade unions (Vandaele, 2018: 673).

Union have been involved in implementation and evaluation of the European Alliance for Apprenticeship (Visionary Analytics, 2018: 22), an initiative of the European Union (EU) that brings governments and key stakeholders together to strengthen the quality, supply and overall image of apprenticeships across Europe (EU, 2023). These instances show the value of trade union involvement in initiatives that promote the employability of young workers.



## SECTION 3: YOUTH POLICY OPTIONS

### 3.1 Introduction

Trade unions face many youth policy options. These include paying attention to 1) national education and training policies and the creation of quality jobs for the youth and 2) adopting new strategies and practices that enable recruitment young people (ILO, n.d.: 3). Unions that endeavour in these policy options become more attractive to young works.

### 3.2 National Education and training policies and creation of quality jobs

Education and training investments generate both private and social returns (Asafu-Adjaye, 2012). The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) maintains that education equips individuals with requisite knowledge and skills that enable them to contribute to the development of society (GSS, 2019: 19). It also enable young women and men to break vicious circle of poverty and exclusion (ILO, n.d.: 3).

Nevertheless, educational attainment in Ghana is low. About quarter (24.9%) of the country's female population 15 years and older have

never attended school (GSS, 2019: 25). Among the male population that is 15 years and older, 12.1 percent have never been to school (ibid.). The Ghana Employers' Association (GEA) has decried the skills levels in the country, arguing that it impinge on the ability of the manufacturing sector in Ghana to effectively participate in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) (Otoo, et. al, 2021: 20-21).

The contradictions between the social and private returns of education and the low educational attainment in Ghana call for trade union advocacy in education and training. Education is key to reducing decent work deficits (ILO, n.d.: 3). The ILO has urged unions to advocate for:

### *National Education and training policies and creation of quality jobs*

- i. expansion of access to quality and relevant basic education;
- ii. increased investment in education and teacher-training;
- iii. children to be in school, not at work; and
- iv. elimination of discrimination in respect of access to education

### 3.3 Adopting new strategies and practices that enable recruitment young people

Vulnerability of young workers is higher, especially where of trade unions are absent (ILO, n.d., 7). Rising joblessness in Ghana has made the youth amenable to exploitation by employment agencies (See 2016-2020 Policies of the TUC). The decent work deficits that young workers face can also be linked to their lack information about rights at work and the role of trade unions in the promotion of workers' rights and decent living (ibid.). Hence, protecting the rights of young workers requires improved trade union coverage.

It is important to note that trade unions need the youth. The growing number of the youth joining the la-

bour market annually makes it imperative for unions to organize the youth. Young worker are a necessary component of strong, vibrant, and democratic trade unions (See 2016-2020 Policies of the TUC).

The policy options of the trade unions in organising the youth must focus on both formal and informal economies. Unions need to fight against discrimination, focusing on overcoming the obstacles to equality that are found in companies and the job market (ILO, n.d., 7). In addition, trade unions need to organise young workers by encouraging unionisation of atypical workers and creating organizations that are dedicated to providing appropriate services and benefits to such workers.



## SECTION 4: POLICY GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

### 4.1 Overall Goal

The overall goal of this policy is to encourage more youth to join trade unions, sustain the interests of the youth in trade unions, and to promote active participation of young workers in trade unions

### 4.2 Policy Objectives

#### ***Objective 1: achieve effective participation of the youth in trade union activities.***

Effective participation in union activities is important in mobilisation of young workers and establishing their interests in unions. This is necessary in ensuring utilisation of the resources of trade unions, including young members. This objective shall be measured by the presence and contribution of young workers in trade union activities. It shall be achieved through:

- i. improving the use of social media in communicating trade union activities;
- ii. supporting existing youth structures to effectively engage with trade unions;
- iii. ensuring that all member national unions of TUC (Ghana) establish Youth Desks and Youth structures; and

- iv. adequately resourcing youth structures through the establishment of a fund for youth activities.

#### ***Objective 2: achieve 30 percent participation of youth in trade union activities.***

Young workers are underrepresented in trade union activities. This prevents them from being heard in the unions. It is therefore, important to improve the participation of youth in trade union activities by ensuring that at least 30 percent of participants in trade union activities are young workers. This shall be achieved through:

- i. ensuring that 30 percent of participants of trade union activities are young workers; and
- ii. Use social media to ensure hybrid participation in trade union meetings;

#### ***Objective 3: increase the number of the youth in member unions of the TUC (Ghana).***

Many young workers, especially those in new forms of employment and those operating in the informal economy remain outside of trade unions. Such workers lack trade union protection, while their inclusion



into unions would boost trade union power and energy. Hence, extending trade union coverage to such workers is beneficial to both unions and such workers. The achievement of this shall be measured by the number of new young workers who are organised annually. This shall be achieved through:

- i. institutionalisation of annual young workers organising week;
- ii. annual youth workers week celebration; and
- iii. youth mobilisation campaign through social media;

***Objective 4: increase the involvement of youth leadership of trade unions.***

Trade unions become less attractive to young workers when they do not see themselves reflected in the leadership and structures of unions. Including young workers in trade union enable vibrancy, while ensuring that the issues of such workers are adequately captured by trade unions. To realise this, the policy proposes:

- i. identification and training of potential trade union leaders among the youth;
- ii. establishing internship opportunities for young trade union activists;

- iii. involvement of youth in industrial relations; and
- iv. education and training of youth on trade unionism and leadership skills.

***Objective 5: promote education and training of young workers.***

The fast changing world of work means that marketable skills of today can become obsolete in the near future. Trade union must, therefore, play a role in continuous education and training of young workers. This shall be achieved through;

- i. provision of counselling and support on skills development;
- ii. connecting young workers to education and training programmes; and
- iii. advocacy on technical and vocational skills training.

***Objective 6: ensure active involvement of youth who transition from youth structures.***

Some of the young workers who get to be elected into youth structures do not find spaces in unions after they transition from the youth cohort. This prevents experience sharing and activism by such workers. It is therefore important to connect such activists to their unions and the youth structures. This shall be achieved through:



- i. allowing youth who complete their tenure in youth structures to participated in Youth Conferences as ex-officio members;
- ii. introduction of mentorship programmes; and
- iii. involvement of youth who completed their tenure in annual youth celebration weeks.

**Objective 7: create networks with tertiary students, national service personnel and other youth groups.**

Tertiary students and national service persons are among the most vibrant youth cohorts in Ghana. Yet, interaction between unions and such groups are limited. The youth in unions need to engage with such groups in order to create trade union awareness, forming the basis for organising them when they transition into the labour market. This objective shall be measured by the number of tertiary students and national service persons who participate in youth trade union activities. The strategies to achieve this are:

- i. involvement of national services persons and tertiary students in Youth Conferences;
- ii. outreach to tertiary institutions during youth week celebrations;

- iii. solidarity support to national services persons and tertiary students; and
- iv. formation of student clubs for networking

**Objective 8: Support national youth employment and development programmes**

Trade unions need to appear relevant to young workers. Among others, attracting young workers and sustaining their interest in trade unions requires unions to actively advocate for national youth initiatives. This would be measured by trade union interventions on youth employment and development policy in Ghana. The strategies to achieve this are:

- i. advocacy on the implementation of the National Youth Policy;
- ii. monitoring the implementation of the National Youth Policy;
- iii. facilitation of education and training among young workers; and
- iv. promotion of industrial attachment programmes for young workers.

**5.1 Introduction**

## SECTION 5: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

This chapter provides the institutional framework for the implementation of this policy. It highlights arrangements for implementation, coordination, and evaluation of the policy.

### 5.2 Implementation Plan

This policy shall be implemented by the TUC (Ghana) and its member unions. Annual action plans shall be developed out of this policy and integrated into trade union plans and budgets.

### 5.3 Institutional roles and responsibilities

The NYC, the Youth Desk of the TUC (Ghana), and the Organising Department of the TUC (Ghana) shall oversee the overall implementation of this policy. Youth Desks and focal persons of the member unions of the TUC (Ghana) shall also be involved in the implementation of the policy.

### 5.4 Resource mobilisation and financing

Resource mobilisation and financing of this policy shall happen in two ways. First, the TUC (Ghana) and member unions shall integrate the activities towards the realisation of the key objectives into their annual

plans and budget. Second, the TUC (Ghana) and member unions shall also mobilise resources to complement the trade union efforts in the implementation of the policy. Support from international trade union solidarity organisations and development partners would be explored for the implementation of this policy.

### 5.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of this policy shall happen at multiple level. At the apex is the TUC (Ghana)'s system for monitoring policies and resolutions. The next level for tracking progress towards the stated key objectives, is the NYC which shall discuss policy implementation at its regular meetings.

### 5.6 Sustainability of policy implementation

The sustainability of policy implementation is based on two main assumptions. First, it is assumed that the key objectives of this policy shall be mainstreamed into annual plans and budgets of trade unions. Second, trade unions shall retain and improved human resource capacity that would enable the implementation of this policy.

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