

Retaining and Enhancing Employment

(National Development Planning)

There is the emerging challenge to small developing societies to address the management of their workforce. Faced with the challenges of high unemployment, underemployment and the vagaries that come with a changing labour market, policy makers are required to revisit current policies, with a view of eliminating the threat of social dislocation that is most likely to manifest itself in the high incidence of poverty.

For the purpose of addressing a country's human resource needs alongside its national development programme, both in the short and medium term; policy makers should be inclined to pay attention to strategies for driving and retaining employment, and stimulating investment.

Strategies for driving employment

Whereas the strategies employed may vary base on the economic pillars of the individual societies, there are three basic strategies that should be considered.

Promoting the diversification of the agricultural sector into producing new crops that have the potential to stimulate the formation of new industries.

Promote a widening of services offered that are technologically driven to be competitive on the open market.

Promoting of Innovations towards supporting the introduction of new technologies that can lead to the utilization of new skill sets.

Strategies for retaining employment

These may include but not limited to:

Establishing a Manage Migration Policy.

The paying of attention to the jobs held by foreign workers.

Addressing the levels of undocumented workers that are employed.

Undertaking a review of the demographics of the local labour force. This should concern itself with:

- The aging work force – The numbers exiting the workforce by 2020
- The projected number of entrants into the labour force on an annual basis
- The need to recruit new workers to avoid labour shortages in specific spheres of economic activity.
- Address the issue of engaging new technologies in the workplace
- The training and retraining of the workforce in order to avoid jobs being taken by persons from abroad

Investment

The creation of new investment opportunities become critical to ensuring retention and sustainability. It requires that emphasis is placed both on local and foreign direct investment.

Strategies initiated should be directed at:

- Development of the Informal Sector, with an emphasis on Social Protection and Employment Promotion Schemes.
- The development of small and medium enterprises that are potential labour intensive, by introducing stimulus packages - tax incentive measures
- Promotion of programmes that support micro financing.
- Focus ought to be placed on a macroeconomic policy as a stimulus to employment creation, driven by investment, financial and trade policies.
- Direct Foreign investment to be in line with national agenda

Collective Bargaining

The focus of the labour movement should be that of working with the state and capital to create a stable working environment, at the heart of which is worker satisfaction, the promotion of good employer-employee relations, efficiency and productivity.

Emphasis to be placed on sustaining and promoting new employment opportunities, which satisfy the principles of decent work, and to the promote efforts that lead to poverty eradication.

- Promoting job security.
- Arresting the Brain Drain
- Entry level jobs – remuneration
- Revisiting compensation benefits to be paid to employees
- Keeping the minimum wage above the poverty threshold
- Addressing the development of casual employment that is driven by contract engagement, which results in eroding the bargaining power of workers, contributes to a greater differential in wages and a worsening of income distribution.
- Hours of Work: Engaging of the Flexi time Arrangement should be an option in the interest of the promotion of greater levels of efficiency and productivity.