

Unlocking the Demographic Dividend in Ethiopia: How entrepreneurship can help drive job creation

Pre-word

Ethiopia has a window of opportunity to foster entrepreneurs' job creation opportunities if the country capitalizes on its demographic dividend – the youth bulge. The demographic trends in Ethiopia suggest that the working-age population is expected to grow to 96 million by 2025 from 80 million in 2019, which can drive economic growth if deliberate and strategic measures are created to harness youth potential. One employment area that directly impacts Ethiopia's ability to achieve a demographic dividend is creating an enabling environment and investing in entrepreneurship. The weak entrepreneurial culture in Ethiopia, however, puts the youth at a disadvantage. On this account, a powerful platform as the *Entrepreneurship in Ethiopia Summit* is a useful engine to drive change. Such forums create a conducive environment for innovative start-ups, promote a broader framework for entrepreneurial culture development, facilitate access to finance and information, and broaden the horizon that supports high growth entrepreneurs.

The Jobs Creation Commission (JCC) of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is making concerted efforts to proactively identify and lobby for policy changes and reforms that deter young entrepreneurs. In recognition of the prominent role that entrepreneurs play in driving job creation, JCC developed a six-year [Plan of Action for Job Creation \(PAJC\)](#) to foster the business environment and conditions necessary for high-potential and high-growth entrepreneurs. As part of this strategic objective, the PAJC outlines a roadmap to build a vibrant micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSMEs) ecosystem and ensure the creation of sustainable jobs that are decent and fulfilling.

The second 2021 *Entrepreneurship in Ethiopia Summit* organized by the Jobs Creation Commission and the Swiss-based World Demographic & Ageing Forum holds great potential to foster enterprise creation and growth. The dialogue amongst government, non-government, private sector and development partners, and the learnings from the stakeholders' survey from the first joint summit in 2019 provided vital areas of focus to address the legal, social, and regulatory barriers.

Building on that, the 2021 *Entrepreneurship in Ethiopia Summit* aims at providing platform for aspiring early-stage entrepreneurs to expand their network, improve access to finance and market, and showcase the importance of investing in entrepreneurs with high-growth potential in Ethiopia.

*Ephrem T. Lemango (MD, MA), Commissioner
Jobs Creation Commission,
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
Cell: +251912-615-651/ +251944-70-3766
www.jobscommission.gov.et
Twitter: @Dr_Ephrem
Skype: eplemango_1*