



**COMMUNIQUE OF THE FIRST EDUCATIONAL SUMMIT BY FIRDAOUS
INTEGRATED SERVICES LIMITED HELD VIRTUALLY ON 7th NOVEMBER 2020
AT 10:00 A.M. WEST AFRICAN TIME**

**THEME: EDUCATION AS THE MAIN CAUSE OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN
AFRICA**

PREAMBLE

The first virtual educational summit of Firdaos Integrated Services Limited (FIS) was held on Saturday 7th November 2020 with the theme: “Education as the Main Cause of Unemployment in Africa”. The Chief Host was Mr. Abdulkareem Azeez, President & Director of Studies at (FIS), while the session was moderated by Mr. Swaleh Hemed Wengo, Vice President and Director of Operations and Logistics and Miss Hamdi Abdikani Shire, FIS Director of Finance & Mobilization. The Summit invited Four (4) Speakers & two (2) Contributors from both academia and the employers of labour. They are; Mrs. Yvonne Shasuvila, Career Development Coach, Co-Founder StaffScout – Kenya; Dr. Tajudeen Sanni, Senior Lecturer Kampala International University – Uganda; Mr. Soola Bolaji, Brand Management Professional – Nigeria; Dr. Leah Ndimurwimo, Senior Lecturer Nelson Mandela University - South Africa; Prof (Dr.) Kasim Balarabe, Associate Professor & Associate Dean O. P. Jindal Global University – India and Dr. Hanafi Hammed, Senior Lecturer Al Hikmah University – Nigeria.

Sub Themes: The following sub themes were extracted from the main theme:

- “why graduates are unemployed”
- “The role of career guidance and counseling in course selection and job creation”
- “Using Education to create jobs”

- “The role of employers in job creation and curriculum design”

OPENING REMARKS

The FIS President gave a brief background about the company and hailed the important role played by the FIS in its four (4) thematic areas of Business Management, Conflict Resolution, Relationship Management and Good & Corporate Governance. He stated that the company has successfully trained participants from Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Rwanda, South Sudan and South Africa among others. On the theme of the summit, he identifies the existing gap between what is taught in our universities and what is needed in the labour market. The huge disconnect between theoretical knowledge in the classroom and the practical skills required in the job market. He submits that the time is ripe to have educational curriculum that addresses our peculiar needs as Africans. He concluded by suggesting that graduate youth unemployment should be streamlined and traced back to respective universities which perhaps should steer such universities into action to address why their products are unemployed.

ACTIVITIES

In her presentation, Mrs. Yvonne Shasuvila discussed “why graduates are unemployed”. She outlined the problem by giving an example of Kenya where forty percent (40%) of graduates are unemployed. She further elaborates that on the same percentage, employers indicate they cannot find suitable and employable graduates based on talent, technical skills or job readiness skills which according to her are the major key gap in graduates unemployment.

In his presentation Dr. Tajudeen Sanni addressed “The role of career guidance and counseling in course selection and job creation”. He elaborated that career guidance helps the student to answer the five questions of: what, why, how, where and when. He went on to emphasize that

career guidance and course selection should start in primary school or even pre-primary and apart from specialist counseling, every teacher needs to receive training in education psychology and counseling which in turn help students choose best courses and careers. Lastly, in merging career guidance and job creation, he outlines that career guidance prepares students based on market and societal needs which boosts opportunity for job creation.

Mr. Soola Bolaji in his presentation discussed “The role of employers in job creation and curriculum design”. According to him, he was shocked to see his children studying the same books he, his father and grandfather studied. He elaborated that our African curriculum is yet to be updated to the modern-day development and thus making African youths not competitive enough due to studying outdated curriculum. He further elaborated that the lack of practicality in our curriculum which is majorly theory based contributes to the unemployment and thus he emphasized that there is need to bring on board employers of labour in creation and design of curriculum so that the market needs can be incorporated in the curriculum.

Dr. Leah Ndimurwimo in her presentation discussed, “Using Education to create jobs”. She reiterated the challenge of unemployment of graduates in Africa and made it clear that acquisition of formal education does not guarantee employment. She identifies a number of causes to this challenge namely; that the skill sets in Africa are limited; outdated curriculum which fail to meet up with the dynamics and ever changing requirements of the labour market; inability of both government and private sectors to create jobs commensurate with the number of graduates being produced yearly; learning institutions offer a lot of qualifications that are not tailored for the African markets; tendencies of “cut and paste curricula” and corruption in job placements. Etc.

In the contribution session, Associate Prof. Kasim Balarabe explained that he does not totally agree with the theme of the summit that education is the main cause of unemployment. However, he explained that the educational system as it is needs improvement in order to make it better so as to solve the unemployment problem in Africa.

Dr. Hanafi A. Hammed in his contribution underscores the need to have an improved educational system in Africa and highlights why the stakeholders must work together in order to have the unemployment issue sorted out. He cited the Nigeria educational sector vis-à-vis the alarming unemployment rates as a serious concern which must be immediately addressed as a matter of national emergency.

RESOLUTIONS

After an in-depth presentation by the speakers and the contributors, the following resolutions and recommendations were provided:

- ❖ Government must prioritize and improve funding in the educational sector;
- ❖ Public Private Partnership must be encouraged especially in research, funding and curriculum development;
- ❖ University Lecturers should de-emphasize strike as the only method of getting government attention and come up with more creating way of engagement which safe students from spending additional years in the university;
- ❖ More attention should be given to science and technologically based program and courses
- ❖ Focus on employability and job readiness training for professionals, skilled and unskilled workers;

- ❖ Curriculum developers, educational institutions and employers of labor need to collaborate to harmonize and revise the curriculum to match the skills needed by industries;
- ❖ Much emphasis should be placed on entrepreneurship training in both secondary and tertiary institutions;
- ❖ Creation of platforms for candidates to market their skills to potential employers;
- ❖ To mainstream counseling into the whole academic and career process;
- ❖ Curriculum should be designed to produce job creators rather than job seekers
- ❖ Curriculum must be designed to address our peculiar needs as Africans
- ❖ Government needs to develop the real sector to create more jobs across the supply chain and improve the vocational competencies along the line;
- ❖ The need to detoxify the system of nepotism and all sorts of corruption in seeking admission and choice of courses;
- ❖ Counseling should include ethical aspect to improve civic responsibility and parent should stop forcing their children to enroll for a particular course;
- ❖ Investing in human resource is key to any sustainable political and socio-economic development, hence the urgent need for all stakeholders in the educational sector to strive in having a robust system that addresses our needs as Africans.

CLOSING

The summit ended my closing remarks and vote of thanks from Mr. Akinwumi John Ayobami, Vice President & Director of Administrative Affairs at FIS.

*Annexure 1: Attendee Report