Youth unemployment in Uganda: Roots of the problem and possible ways to mitigate them

How Fontes Foundation’s Youth Program can improve its fight against widespread urban youth unemployment in the “Pearl of Africa“

Master Thesis
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Abstract

Uganda has one of the fastest growing and youngest population in the world. While this can be a good basis for economic growth, it also poses an immense challenge to the country in the form of widespread youth unemployment, which can threaten the political stability and the sustainable development of the pearl of Africa. This master thesis is analysing the reasons that are at the source of urban youth unemployment in Uganda. To reach this goal, the youth centre of the Norwegian based Non-Governmental Organization Fontes Foundation serves as a case study, which is located in the suburbs of Uganda's capital Kampala. On the basis of interviews and focus group discussions with the affected youth, the personal experiences of the author working as the Regional Coordinator for Fontes Foundation in Uganda, comparisons with other NGOs’ youth programs as well as academic research, those reasons will be identified for the specific circumstances of this youth centre. Furthermore, several suggestions for improvement are being made about how the organization can improve its fight against widespread urban youth unemployment. Pursuing the goal of being practically relevant and implementable, those suggestions are again specifically tailored to the situation that Fontes Foundation’s youth program is facing and should serve as a starting point for future projects and program extensions at the youth centre.
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<tr>
<td>ADD</td>
<td>Action on Disability and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>AEO</td>
<td>African Economic Outlook</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<td>AS</td>
<td>Aksje Selskap (Eng.: Limited)</td>
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<td>BRAC</td>
<td>Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee</td>
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<td>BTVET</td>
<td>Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<td>CBM</td>
<td>Christian Blind Mission</td>
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<td>CEP</td>
<td>Conservation Education Program</td>
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<td>CIA</td>
<td>Central Intelligence Agency</td>
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<td>CV</td>
<td>Curriculum Vitae</td>
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<td>DPO</td>
<td>Disabled People’s Organization</td>
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<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of the Congo</td>
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<td>DYEP</td>
<td>Disabled Youth Empowerment Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
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<td>ELA</td>
<td>Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents</td>
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<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
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<td>FF</td>
<td>Fontes Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>FSP</td>
<td>Financial Service Provider</td>
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<td>GCB</td>
<td>Global Corruption Barometer</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<td>International Youth Foundation</td>
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<td>LC</td>
<td>Local Council</td>
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<td>MFI</td>
<td>Micro Finance Institution</td>
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<td>Music, Dance and Drama</td>
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<td>MYDEL</td>
<td>Mengo Youth Development Link</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>NOK</td>
<td>Norwegian Kronor</td>
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<td>Norad</td>
<td>Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<td>ON</td>
<td>Omidyar Network</td>
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<td>OVRC</td>
<td>Ocoko Vocational Rehabilitation Centre</td>
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<td>PRB</td>
<td>Population Reference Bureau</td>
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<tr>
<td>PYC</td>
<td>Potentiam Youth (Development) Centre</td>
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<td>SME</td>
<td>Small and Medium Enterprise</td>
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<td>SMP</td>
<td>Single Mother’s Program</td>
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<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
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<td>Uganda Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<td>UGX</td>
<td>Ugandan Shilling</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>United National Capital Development Fund</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>USD</td>
<td>United States Dollar</td>
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<td>USDC</td>
<td>Ugandan Society for Disabled Children</td>
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<td>UVQF</td>
<td>Uganda Vocational Qualifications Framework</td>
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<td>UWA</td>
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<td>UYONET</td>
<td>Uganda Youth Network</td>
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<td>WEF</td>
<td>World Economic Forum</td>
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<td>YAI</td>
<td>Youth Action International</td>
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<td>YBU</td>
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1. General Introduction

1.1. Problem statement

The Republic of Uganda has one of the fastest growing populations in the world. The high population growth rate as well as the high fertility rate led to today’s situation where more than 50% of the population is below the age of 18.

As a consequence of this high population growth, youth unemployment has risen sharply over the last couple of years. According to a survey carried out by ActionAid and the Uganda National NGO Forum, the unemployment rate among young people in Uganda is 61.6 percent in 2012 (ActionAid, 2012, p. 27). Given the fact that that more than 50% of the population is below 18, the amount of unemployed people in Uganda is enormous. This can and will most likely have destabilizing and disturbing effects on the economy as well as the society at large of the country in the foreseeable future, as the youth is very often at the source of revolutions and political turmoil, of which the Arab Spring is just one example.

But the high growth rate of the Ugandan population is not the only possible reason for the increased number of youth being unemployed. General poverty, an outdated education system and corruption are only some of the reasons that are often mentioned in connection with youth unemployment in Africa, and more specifically in Uganda.

The basis of this master thesis is to identify and analyse the different reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda. Building up on this, the Potential Youth Development Centre, a program run by the Norwegian-based NGO Fontes Foundation (FF) to fight youth unemployment in a urban setting at the outskirts of Kampala, the capital of Uganda, will serve as a case study for mitigating this enormous problem which can be a threat to the political and economic stability of the whole country. On the basis of the analysis of the reasons for youth unemployment from the first part of the thesis, various suggestions will be made of how this Youth Centre and Fontes Foundation at large can contribute to the mitigation of youth unemployment in urban Uganda. It is also important to discuss the limitations/constraints for those suggestions to make sure that those suggestions are feasible enough to implement them in practice. The idea of the thesis is to successfully perform a balancing act between well-reflected academic research and practical relevance. Both the analysis of the reasons for youth unemployment as well as the suggestions for improvement for FF’s youth program are based on the personal experiences of the author during his 1.5 years of work as a volunteer and later on as the Regional Coordinator of Fontes Foundation in Uganda and are then supported by a review of the academic literature as well as 7 interviews and 2 focus group discussions with actual and former core course students at the Youth Centre.

1.2. Research questions and methodology

In order to have a guideline through the process that has been mentioned above, 5 research questions have been formulated:
1. What are the roots/causes of youth unemployment in Uganda according to the academic literature, international organizations and the government of Uganda?

2. What are the roots/causes of youth unemployment in Uganda according to the affected target group (unemployed and disadvantaged youth in an urban area in Kampala) as well as according to the experiences of the author?

3. What is an organization like Fontes Foundation already doing to fight youth unemployment and what are alternative approaches from other organizations?

4. How can Fontes Foundation’s youth program, more specifically the Potentiam Youth Development Centre (PYC), be modified and improved to fight youth unemployment more effectively?

5. What are the challenges/limitations for the successful practical implementation of those suggestions for improvement at the PYC?

Question 1 will be answered through a literature review about youth unemployment in Uganda respectively Africa in general, as a lot of other Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries have similar problems. Question 2 will be answered on the basis of interviews with former core course students from the PYC, two focus group discussions with two different core course classes and the personal experiences of the author in his work as the Regional Coordinator of Fontes Foundation in Uganda. Question 3 will be answered through a review of Fontes Foundation specific documentation and material as well as through the review of documentation from other selected youth development organizations. Question 4 will be answered through the analysis of the answers to the previous research questions and Question 5 will be answered on the basis of the answers to Question 4. During the whole development of the thesis, personal experiences of the author should serve as starting points for further (academic) discussion or to confirm points made by the literature as well as the opinion of the students on the ground. Like this, it will be tried to make sure that the thesis remains practically relevant for the work of Fontes Foundation and that it does not become a mere literature review on a global level that lost all connection to the actual case.

It is also important to mention that this master thesis follows a qualitative and not a quantitative approach. While a certain number of interviews and focus group discussions have been carried out during the field research in Kampala, the number of participants is far too small to be representative of the Ugandan youth overall. A similar limitation counts for the personal experiences of the author as well, which are mostly restricted to one specific NGO. But as the final purpose of this thesis is to make suggestions for the improvement of the Fontes Foundation youth program and especially the Potentiam Youth Centre, the analysis of the collected information should be enough to reach this target.

1.3. Purpose of the thesis

The purpose of this thesis is three-fold: First of all, the reasons for youth unemployment should be identified for disadvantaged youth in urban Uganda, more specifically for the
youth in Muyenga-Bukasa, Kampala, where FF’s Potentiam Youth Development Centre (PYC) is located. This should provide Fontes Foundation staff as well as other organizations that are interested in youth Development in urban Uganda with a quick overview over the most problematic areas.

Secondly, the thesis should provide Fontes Foundation with new ideas for future programs and projects in regard to youth development that are specifically tailored towards the PYC. The focus lies on the feasibility of the suggestions under the specific circumstances in which the centre operates in Kampala. As the author will return to Uganda after completing his master in Switzerland to continue working as the Regional Coordinator of Fontes Foundation in Uganda, he can himself be involved in the evaluation of the suggestions made in this thesis as well as in the planning of a potential implementation. In the optimal case, one or multiple suggestions are going to be implemented at some point in the future that are based on what has been proposed here. In that case, the thesis was not only relevant for practise, but also had a direct influence on a youth development program in Uganda by increasing the available funding and broadening the services offered to the youth at the centre.

Last but not least, the thesis should at least contribute a small part to improve the livelihood of unemployed youth in Uganda. As Fontes Foundation is a charity-based, not-for-profit Non-Governmental Organization, it is important to keep in mind the mission and vision of the organization. While the business administration/management aspects are of course crucial to run such an organization in a professional and sustainable way, one should never forget about the underlying foundation of Fontes Foundation, which is empowering disadvantaged communities in developing countries.

1.4. Definitions/specifications

The official name of the organization that serves as a case study in this paper is Fontes Foundation. For simplicity reasons, the organization is also called Fontes several times in the paper. When using the term Fontes, it is always referred to the Foundation and not to Fontes AS or Fontes Limited, which is the for-profit consultancy sister organization of Fontes Foundation.

The official full name of the Fontes Foundation’s youth centre is “Potentiam Youth Development Centre”, but it is often referred to as “youth centre”, “Potentiam Youth Centre” or the short form “PYC”. Those terms are interchangeable with each other and are used randomly during the whole thesis.

When the word “Africa” is used in this thesis, it is mainly meant to describe Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and not the North African states (e.g. Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, etc.). Even though a lot of the issues discussed here do also apply to those states, direct comparisons or generalisations do make more sense when doing them with other SSA states.
2. Introduction to Uganda and the problem of youth unemployment

This chapter should serve to briefly introduce into the country Uganda and more specifically into the problem of youth unemployment by showing the severity of this Africa-wide problem, which is especially serious in Uganda because of its explosive population growth. It will be shown that this topic is highly relevant when carrying out development assistance projects in a Sub-Saharan African country like Uganda.

2.1. Uganda – a brief introduction

“Uganda is the pearl” (Churchill, 1909, p. 197). This famous exclamation of Winston Churchill in his book “My African Journey” after his travels through Africa as a young man gave Uganda the nickname “Pearl of Africa”, which is still an often-used expression when talking about the country. The Republic of Uganda is a landlocked country at the Northern shore of Lake Victoria in East Africa bordering South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The “country” (or rather the Buganda kingdom at that time) has been a protectorate of the British Empire from 1894 onward until its independence on the 9th October 1962 (CIA World Factbook, n.d., Uganda – Government).

Like a lot of African countries, the Ugandan population consists of more than 40 different ethnic groups which are called tribes and are then further sub-divided into clans. The by large the biggest ethnic group are the Baganda tribe, which comprises almost 17 % of the Ugandan population and which is located in the Central Region of Uganda (Hivos, 2014, Ethnic and political diversity in Uganda). Other important ethnic groups are the Ankole (8 %), Iteso (8 %), Basoga (8 %), Bakiga (7 %), Banyarwanda (6 %) Langi (6%), Bagisu (5 %), Acholi (4 %) and the Lugbara (4 %). This rich diversity of tribes has partly been caused by the southward migration of Luo speaking people from today’s South Sudan into Northern and Eastern Uganda in the 15th century, compared to the Bantu speaking people that already populated the Western and Southern/Central areas of the country (Karugire, 2010, p. 2-3), which is seen as one of the major events in Ugandan history. The Baganda are also constituting the population of the Buganda kingdom, one of four remaining kingdoms in Uganda from which the country has its modern name (Uganda is the Swahili expression for Buganda). The kingdom – or the king respectively, the Kabaka – is still an important source of identification for the Baganda and even though the king does not have any formal political
powers, making political decisions without the consent of the Kabaka always created tensions between the political elite (the colonial ruler Great Britain as well as Ugandan rulers since 1962) and the Baganda population.

Uganda has an estimated population of around 35 million inhabitants today (the results of the 2014 census are not yet out), of which 15.6 % live in rural and 84.4 % live in urban areas, with rapidly ongoing and continuous urbanization (CIA World Factbook, n.d., Uganda – Urbanization). Regarding religion, Uganda is predominantly Christian with 42 % of the population being Catholics, 43 % Protestants or other Christian beliefs and 12 % Moslems (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS], 2002, p. 11). While traditional believes and superstition are still wide-spread in the Ugandan society, only 1 % of the population consider themselves as believing in the traditional Ugandan religion. The political and economic capital is Kampala in Central Uganda at the shores of Lake Victoria, with 1.6 million inhabitants (stand 2011)¹, which is at the same time the capital of the Baganda kingdom. Other larger urban areas (which are all considerably smaller than Kampala) are Mbarara in the West, Gulu and Lira in the North and Jinja and Mbale in the East. President Yoveri Museveni took over power in 1986 through a military coup and is since then in power, having brought relative stability and economic development, especially compared to the civil war torn areas between the Ugandan independence in 1962 and Museveni’s take-over of power.

Since then, Uganda went through several economic reforms and developed more and more into a liberal market economy with ongoing liberalization, privatization and decentralization with focus on poverty reduction and the provision of public services until 2002 before returning to more interventionist policies with a focus on economic growth (Kuteesa, Tumusiime-Mutebile, Whitworth & Williamson, 2009, pp. 2-3). Those reforms were accompanied with GDP growth rates of averaged 7 % per year in the 1990’s and 2000’s before it became more volatile again from 2006 onward (World Bank, 2014, Uganda Overview).

Other areas like the demographic development, the high (youth) unemployment rate, education and corruption will be discussed in more detail in later chapters of this master thesis and will therefore not be discussed in this introductory chapter. The purpose of this short introductory chapter was to give the reader a quick overall introduction into Uganda.

2.2. Youth unemployment in Uganda – Situation and seriousness of the problem

After the general introduction and overview over Uganda from the last sub-chapter, the actual situation of youth unemployment will be presented and the possible threats of this problem to the future development of the country. As youth unemployment in Uganda is at the basis of this thesis, it is important to be aware of the dimensions of this issue and to get an impression of how serious the situation is.

¹ The unofficial numbers will be considerably higher as there is a lot of informal settlement going on in the city.
2.2.1. Demographic development

Uganda has one of the youngest populations in the world with roughly 70% of the population aged under 25 years and 58% of the population aged under 18 years (UBOS, 2013, p. 11). The National Youth Policy defines “youth” as all persons between 12-30 years old (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, 2001, chapter 3.0). A more accurate definition of youth has been made by International Youth Foundation’s “YouthMap” in reference to the revised draft national youth policy 2011-2016, in which the government changed the definition of youth to 15-29 years old (International Youth Foundation [IYF], 2011, p. 36). In this thesis, this latter definition of youth will be used as it only considers youth that is already old enough to enter the job market. Starting from such a definition means that around three quarters of the Ugandan population is considered either as youth or children, which represents a massive chunk of the overall national population of 36.3 million estimated in 2012 by the UN, which can be seen in Figure 3 (UN data, n.d., Uganda).

If one is looking at the future demographic trends, the situation will go even further into that direction. According to the World Bank, Uganda resides on rank 6 regarding population growth in 2013 with an annual growth rate of 3.3% and is therefore the third fastest growing country in Africa after South Sudan and Niger (World Bank, n.d., population growth (%)). With a fertility rate of 6 births per woman on average, Uganda also belongs to the ten most fertile countries in the world. This very high population growth expresses itself in the total population of Uganda, which grew from 24.3 m people in 2000 to an estimated 38.9 m in 2014 (World Bank, n.d., population, total). This very high population growth rate together with the still low (even though increasing) life expectancy (57 years on average), the population of Uganda will continue to significantly grow in the future.

2.2.2. Youth unemployment

If one looks at the official unemployment rates of Uganda, it seems as if this is not a problem of big concern for the country. According to the World Bank, the Ugandan unemployment rate was more or less stable at around 4% over the last four years, which would put Uganda

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2 The interesting fact that the 15 most fertile countries in the world are all African countries is a sign of the importance of having a lot of children in the African culture as well as the lack of birth control and family planning in those societies.
on a similar level with countries like Switzerland or Austria (World Bank, 2015, unemployment, total). The unemployment rate measured by the Ugandan Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) in 2010 comes to a similar number (4.2 %) and the “Global Employment Trends 2014” of the International Labour Organization (ILO) comes up with an even lower number (3.9 %) for 2013 (ILO, 2014, Global Employment Trends 2014: Supporting data sets “unemployment”).

Those unemployment rates stand in sharp contrast to surveys that have been carried out over the last couple of years regarding youth unemployment in Uganda. A survey carried out in 2012 by ActionAid, the Development and Research Training and Uganda National NGO forum showed that 61.6 % of the 1100 asked youth in 11 districts of the country answered that they are unemployed (ActionAid, 2012, p. 27). YouthMap also points out that UBOS measured a youth unemployment rate of 18 % for youth aged 15-24 and 16 % for youth aged 24-30 (YouthMap, 2012, p. 16). Given the fact that youth unemployment is a big reason for concern in the Ugandan government and that the president of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, even admitted publicly in 2013 that “unemployment is the main problem affecting the youth in the country and the entire world” (New Vision, 2013, Youth unemployment is most pressing problem – Govt) and that the problem of youth unemployment is starting to get out of hands, the 4 % unemployment seems like a massive understatement and suggests that the actual numbers are closer to the ones stated by ActionAid or YouthMap.

Given the fact that around three quarters of the Ugandan population is falling into the youth bracket between 15-29 and under the assumption that the actual youth unemployment is much higher than the official unemployment rates, it becomes quickly clear that youth unemployment is a serious an overwhelming problem in Uganda. The youth unemployment number of ActionAid (61.6 %) has to be handled with care though as they “only” questioned 1100 youth in “only” 11 out of the 136 districts in Uganda and is therefore probably only representative up to a certain extent. But even the much lower rate of the UBOS of 16 respectively 18 % youth unemployment is already more than alarming enough for the future stability and development of the republic of Uganda with the present and future demographics.

2.2.3. Negative impacts of youth unemployment on the development of Uganda

After some light has been shed on the severity of youth unemployment in Uganda, it should be shown in a next step how this high youth unemployment could negatively influence the stability and development of the country. This sup-chapter is not presenting an in-depth discussion of those impacts but should merely shed some light on the problems that youth unemployment can create.

Sarah Ayres finds in her 2013 research paper “The High Cost of Youth Unemployment” that youth unemployment creates negative long term effects for both the individual youth as well as for a country as a whole. Being unemployed for a longer time at a young age leads to a lack of work experience and skills gathering during this time, which will lead to reduced
earnings over the whole career of a person. Those reduced earnings lead to reduced purchasing power of those youth during all their lives, which again has a negative impact on the overall economy and aggravates the problem of youth unemployment even further as the economic growth of a country is reduced (Ayres, 2013, p. 7). Especially in Uganda’s case (large number of youth and large youth unemployment), this could have strong negative effects on the economic development of the country in the short, middle and long run. On top of this, youth unemployment also creates additional costs for the government as it has to deal with consequences of youth unemployment like increased crime rates or increased welfare payments. Even though Ayres’ study has been made for the US, its findings are also valid for a country like Uganda.

Another very relevant negative consequence of youth unemployment is its effect on political stability. In their quantitative research, Azeng and Yogo come to the conclusion that youth unemployment has a significant negative effect on the political stability in countries, especially developing countries (Azeng & Yogo, 2013, p. 19). This is especially true in countries with a high youth unemployment rate like Uganda.

The East African Community mentions a number of negative effects of youth unemployment in its report “Meeting youth unemployment head on”. Crime and violence amongst youth, commercial sex work and as a result of that the spread of HIV/AIDS, drug abuse and civil disorder are direct consequences of the youth unemployment all over Sub-Saharan Africa according to the EAC (East African Community [EAC], n.d., pp. 177-183). Those illicit activities bring considerable economic and social costs (e.g. increased health costs, increased costs for security and increased level of insecurity, less Foreign Direct Investments (FDI’s), waste of productive human resources, etc.) upon a country on all levels, including individuals, families, the government and society at large.

2.2.4. Preliminary conclusion – relevance of the topic of youth unemployment

As subchapter 2.2. showed, youth unemployment has a serious impact on the development of a country, especially in the case of Uganda. The massive share of youth of the total Ugandan population combined with the very high youth unemployment rate can cause a serious threat to the country’s overall development and to its political stability in particular. It has been shown that the topic of youth unemployment is a highly relevant one for the economic and political development of Uganda. This thesis attempts to contribute towards shedding some light on this major problem of Ugandan society by finding some of the roots of youth unemployment and by contributing towards the mitigation of this threat.

3. Reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda

In this chapter, the reasons for youth unemployment will be discussed. While those reasons are especially identified for the specific circumstances of Fontes Foundation’s youth centre, most of them are also valid when looking at Uganda, Sub-Saharan African countries in
general or at all countries in the world at large. Some of those reasons for youth unemploy-
ment are related to the political and economic realities in the country, while others are rooted
in the social and cultural circumstances in Uganda or have to be analysed on the individual
level.

The purpose of this chapter is to get an overview over the different causes of youth unem-
ployment in urban Uganda, more specifically Kampala, to get an idea of where the roots of
this serious social problem lies. On the basis of that, it can be analysed which of those
causes Fontes Foundation’s Potentiam Youth Development Centre (PYC) is already miti-
gating (chapter 4) and how Fontes Foundation can further improve its program to fight even
more of those reasons or how to fight the already existing one’s in a better way (Chapter
5). The information for this chapter has been gathered through three sources: a review of
the literature available on this topic (especially when specifically tailored for Uganda/African
countries), focus group discussions and interviews with current and former core course stu-
dents from the PYC as well as personal experiences from the author during his work with
Fontes Foundation.

3.1. Systemic/Economic Reasons for youth unemployment

3.1.1 Rural-urban migration

Rural-urban migration is an often mentioned cause for unemployment and youth unemploy-
ment in particular. Most developing countries are facing rapid urbanization over the last 30-
40 years with the trend continuing into this direction. While only 6.7 % of the Ugandan pop-
ulation was living in urban areas in 1980, there were already 14.8 % in 2010 (Mukwaya,
Bamutaze, Mugarura & Benson, 2011, p. 5). The growth rate of urban areas was almost
twice as high over the last 20 years than the growth rate of rural areas. If one takes into
account the agglomeration of urban areas, e.g. areas that are semi-urban and that are lo-
cated at the outskirts of urban centres like Kampala, the urban population increased from
22.4 % in 2002 to 29.3 % in 2010. Given the fact that this trend seems to continue, it can
be assumed that around one third of today’s population in Uganda is living in an urban area
(Mukwaya et al., 2011, p. 7).

The major reason for this ongoing rural-urban migration are economic motivations. People
living on the country side are trying to escape the lower standard of living in rural areas to
find employment and a better life in urban centres like Kampala. This then leads to an over-
supply of labour on the job market in urban areas, as the economy cannot absorb all the
new job seekers that are leaving rural areas and are trying to find employment in the urban
areas.

This is especially relevant and problematic for youth, as youth migration is three times as
high as other migration in Africa according to the UN (Chigunta, 2002, p. 12). The conse-
quences of rural-urban migration are also more serious for youth as through the over-supply
of labour, employers are in the position to become more selective when hiring people, therefore employing more experienced people first, which are normally not the youth. The result is that a lot of youth remains unemployed and is stuck in an urban area as they lack the economic resources to go back home or if they are too ashamed to go back because they failed in their endeavour.

The on-going rural-urban migration was also observed by the author during his 1.5 years of working and living in Uganda. Most youth that was involved in the interviews or the focus group discussions at the PYC did either migrate from a village on the country side or their parents were coming to Kampala one generation ago. A lot of people in Kampala are also regularly going back to their home villages during holidays or festivities like Christmas or Easter, showing the still strong ties between the population living in the cities and the one’s living in rural areas as they just moved out recently. If you ask a Ugandan where he/she is from originally, the answer is almost never “I’m from Kampala”, but rather from villages all over Uganda. The still strong identification of the Ugandan population with their tribe (rather than their district, unlike for example in Switzerland) leads to the result that even second or third generation rural-urban migrants see themselves rather as Acholi, Langi or Banyankole than as citizens of Kampala.

A lot of rural youth is also coming to Kampala or other bigger urban centres like Mbarara or Gulu because of their studies at university and decide to stay afterwards as they prefer the “exciting” lifestyle in the city to the “boring” way of life in the village. While speaking to a lot of local youth on the country side, the author had the impression that the rural youth has the feeling that they have no future in the village, asking you for job opportunities in Kampala or even abroad. The lack of focus on rural development by the Ugandan government is a plausible explanation for this.

3.1.2. Skill mismatch between the education system and employers’ expectations

The mismatch between the type of education provided at schools and the requirements of the labour market is a reason that has been both mentioned by the academic literature (e.g. Chigunta 2002, Haile 2003, ILO 2012, Kellow 2010), the youth from the PYC that participated in the interviews and the focus group discussions (e.g. the interviews with Denis, Immaculate, William as well as both focus group discussions) as well as the observations of the author. It has been stated that the Ugandan (or more general the “African”) school system is far too theoretical and is not preparing the students in an adequate way to find a job after graduation as they lack employable skills, even though the job falls into their field of studies. As Getinet Haile observed in his research, a lot of the unemployed youth in urban areas went through the best education system that a country like Uganda can provide (Haile, 2003, p. 7), which is a sign that the education and skills provided at school is not relevant enough for employers. Kellow comes to a similar conclusion as he shows that an increase in education (e.g. high school or higher) comes with higher unemployment rates for this youth (Kellow, 2010, p. 11). As Simon Peter points it out appropriately, high schools and universities are like “exam factories, concentrating their energies on securing passes
at A grade in exams and have given too little attention to the labour market requirements” (Peter, 2013, p. 10). Even though Uganda made massive improvements regarding educating its population over the last 2-3 decades and more and more youth are enjoying a high level of education, this education is not relevant enough in the labour market for the youth to actually find a job.

This over-reliance on theory and the thereof resulting mismatch of skills between the education provided and the skills expected has also been criticised by the PYC students in the interviews and the two focus group discussions that have been carried out. Especially Denis, who is the Administrative Assistant of the PYC and therefore crucial for the mobilization of new students, identified the poor education system in Uganda as one of the main reasons for youth unemployment (personal communication, December 5, 2014). This gets confirmed by Nakato Nanungi, a social work student from Makerere University in Kampala, who interviewed disadvantaged youth from the Kisenyi 1 parish, one of the poorest slums in Kampala, where 32.5% of the interviewees blamed the too theoretical education system and 12.5% the mismatch between skills and the labour market as the main reasons for youth unemployment (Nanungi, 2011, p. 21).

The author can confirm the above findings and theories on the ground in Uganda. University graduates are very often lacking crucial skills to carry out their jobs, even though they studied exactly in the relevant field. A young woman that has studied Business Administration who is not able to fill in a simple balance sheet in Excel or a young man who studied Software Development and who has no clue of how to write even the simplest code are only two examples of this phenomenon. This over-reliance on theoretical education and the neglect of practical training leads to the fact that holding a degree in a certain field is by no means a reliable sign for employers that the applicants is actually capable. The capability of a potential employee has to be established in time- and money-consuming application interviews and tests.

Another important lesson learned by the author while working in Uganda is that the soft skills are much more important than the hard skills necessary for the job. Honesty, loyalty, being hard-working and reliability are the basis for any kind of job. The best vocational or technical training (e.g. plumbing, civil engineering, electrical wiring) is useless if the person is not able to be on time or to be honest with his/her customers as well as the employer. This is why the author almost uniquely recruits new staff for Fontes Foundation on the basis of attitudes and not on the basis of skills: While the latter ones are still trainable on the job, the former ones are very difficult to teach a person once he or she is in the working process.

This problem can also be observed by looking at the vocational training institutes which are becoming more and more popular in Uganda: While the government has realized that vocational training is key to fight youth unemployment, their approach is very often not holistic.

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3 Those observations have been made by the author when hiring new staff for Fontes Foundation and by exchanging experiences with a partner organization of Fontes Foundation, the Norwegian-based computer company Laboremus Uganda Limited.
enough as it focuses too much on vocational training, neglecting other equally important “soft” skills like having a positive attitude or entrepreneurship skills. A balance has to be found between hard and soft skills to equip the Ugandan youth appropriately before entering the labour market.

3.1.3. Lack of entrepreneurship and management skills

As the assessment study of Fontes Foundation for the set-up of the Potentiam Youth Development Centre showed, a lot of small businesses have started up just recently before the study was carried out around the Bukasa Muyenga area. This shows that there is definitely a spirit of entrepreneurship amongst the people in the neighbourhood of the youth centre as well as that the market is quite dynamic (Fontes Foundation [FF], 2011b, p. 15). This finding gets supported by International Entrepreneurship, which states that the percentage of individuals ages 18 to 64, which are active in either starting up or managing a new enterprise is 29.3% (International Entrepreneurship, 2015, Uganda), which is a considerably high number. This can be confirmed by the authors experience in Uganda: It feels as if every Ugandan has at least one side business besides his main employment, for example a pig farm, a business importing computer spare parts from India or a small catering service. Those businesses are mostly followed during the weekends or before and after work.4 The same goes for the youth at the Potentiam Youth Development Centre of Fontes Foundation, which are very keen and highly motivated to work in self-employment by setting up their own businesses, may this be a boutique, a secretarial bureau or a catering service.

While the entrepreneurship spirit is present in Uganda, the capability and skills of the youth to be successful entrepreneurs are lacking though. According to the Omidyar Network’s “Accelerating Entrepreneurship in Africa” report from 2013, the overwhelming majority of entrepreneurs in Africa thinks that there is an inadequate focus within schools and tertiary institutions on the practical skills required to start, manage or work in entrepreneurial ventures (Omidyar Network [ON], 2013, p. 8). On the one hand, there is a lack of a culture of innovation in most schools and universities, which expresses itself in the lack of entrepreneurship centres as well as specialised courses in entrepreneurship or innovation and technology. Therefore, students feel inadequately prepared for opening up their own businesses and prefer to work in employment. Another problem is the lack of business culture amongst entrepreneurs.

This lack of “soft” skills, which have a lot to do with attitude and values compared to the more technical “hard” skills, can be observed on a daily basis while running the HR management of an organization like Fontes Foundation. Employees very often have a low self-confidence, as nobody ever cared about their opinion, neither at school nor at home. This flaw in the system also has a negative influence on their capacity for critical thinking and innovative problem-solving: Very often, employees react surprised when the author asks

4 As an example, a young employee of the Fontes Foundation project management in Kampala is offering breakfast snacks at the office which she buys on her way to work and then re-sells it to the people at the office, gaining a small profit out of it.
them for their opinion, even though the success of the organization is crucially dependent on the local knowledge of the employee. The hierarchical structure at home, at school and at most workplaces has the effect that employees wait for the decision of the supervisor and just carry out work assigned to them, instead of thinking on their own. As the ON report stated correctly, the source of this problem roots in both the parental as well as the formal school education in Uganda.

In addition, a lot of youth are also lacking the technical business skills that is required to be a successful entrepreneur. Employers complained in the FF assessment study for the PYC that there is a serious lack of even the most basic business and management knowledge (e.g. accounting, project management, market research, etc.). This also got confirmed by Denis Ssebugwawo, the main responsible for student recruitment at the youth centre, as well as by the experiences of the author. Very often, the youth have good ideas for businesses but they do not know how to run a business, even on the smallest scale possible. A good example for this is Mohammed Kinene, a former student of the PYC, who said in one of the interviews carried out for this thesis that he does not know why his retail business had collapsed which he was running a couple of years ago (personal communication, December 15, 2014). He tried to run a business with the limited education that he got during his childhood, and was failing without even knowing why.

The lack of teaching sufficient business skills at a lot of vocational training institutes is also a problem observed by the author in this context. While vocational training is indeed one of the keys to fight youth unemployment in Uganda, it is also very important to provide business management skills so that the youth can actually start up a business in the respective field of their studies. Without this training, the youth is forced to look for a job and getting employed, leaving a lot of potential unused.

### 3.1.4 Limited access to financial capital

The very limited access to financial capital is another reason for unemployment and in particular youth unemployment that gets mentioned often in the literature. Both the International Labour Organization (ILO) on an international level and the Uganda Youth Network (UYONET) on a national level recognise that the lack of capital is an important explanation for youth unemployment (ILO, 2012, p. 27; Uganda Youth Network [UYONET], 2010, p. 5).

According to the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the youth is mainly facing three barriers when trying to access and use formal financial services in developing countries: Restrictions in the legal and regulatory environment, inappropriate and inaccessible financial products offered by financial service providers (FSPs) and poor financial capabilities of the youth (UN Capital Development Fund [UNCDF], 2012, p. 9). Restrictions in the legal and regulatory environment include the requirement of a minimum age to open an own bank account or to get access to loans as well as the requirement of identification documents. In cases where adolescents are allowed to have their own bank account, they need the legal authorization from their parents or guardian to open it and to withdraw money, which takes away flexibility and independence from the youth and expose them to the threat of getting
money taken away from those adults. Some FSPs might even increase the requirements on a voluntary basis as youth is considered a high risk group of customers (UNCDF, 2012, p. 10).

This is exactly the situation in Uganda, where the legal age for bank accounts is 18 and younger clients need the authorization of their legal guardian. Another major problem observed by the author is that the biggest part of the population in the country does not have a valid identification document like a national ID, a driving license or a birth certificate. Because of this, a lot of people – especially youth as they are often lacking the money to get such documents – have no chance to get financial capital for their studies or to open up their business.

Another obstacle that the youth is facing is that banks have high open or minimum balance requirements, fees for withdrawals/deposits or inconvenient locations which are too far away from the places where the youth is living and therefore creates transport costs (UNCDF, 2012, p. 13). This can also be observed when running a bank account in Uganda: For every single transaction, a fee gets charged to the bank account, which means that the customer needs a certain amount of money on it just to pay the charges. While the problem of FSPs being “too far away” from the youth does not apply for the PYC in Kampala, this issue occurs on the country side where some of Fontes Foundation’s projects are located: The banks are far away in towns that are only reachable through public transport, which comes with high transport costs. As the youth is more likely to deposit or withdraw small amounts of money, it is always discretionary if it is really worth it to go to the bank or to just keep the money at home, where it is more likely to be spent instead of saved for school fees or future investments in their businesses.

Regarding the access to financial capital in the form of loans, Richard Akisimire concluded in his master thesis research about microfinance credit terms for SMEs in Uganda that those credit terms are perceived as unfavourable by the 374 SMEs involved in the study. It was found that the maximum loan amounts were not adequate enough for the borrowers to meet their financial needs, that the microfinance institutions (MFIs) are not flexible enough regarding their collection procedures and that the interest rates are too high (Akisimire, 2010, p. 34).

But the problem for the Ugandan youth that wants to set up an own business already starts at an earlier point: The author realized after talking to several micro finance providers in Uganda that start-ups of youth entrepreneurs are not supported by most of them as the risk of failure is too high and there are no securities guaranteed to the institutions. The MFIs are only willing to support a young entrepreneur once he or she has been in business for at least a couple of months and has proven that he or she is capable of running it.

The limited access to finances of Ugandan youth is also reflected in the evaluation of the Potentiam Youth Development Centre. Even though all core course students are presenting a viable and comprehensive business plan as their final exam, only very few of them are
actually going to implement it afterwards, even though a lot of them would be very eager to start up. The main explanation provided by the students for this is the lack of funds, so most of them are aiming at working in employment for 2-3 years to first accumulate some capital for their own business (FF, 2014c, p. 4).

3.1.5. Inadequate job matching – information gap between youth and employers

Another issue that came up during the second focus group discussion with PYC core course students was that the students felt the need that the Potentiam Youth Development Centre should help the students connecting with employers to provide them with future employment opportunities (Focus group discussion, 2014b, p. 3). Their argument was that Fontes Foundation has a large network in Kampala through its board members and all the mentors from the mentorship program who are working in various private companies, NGOs and government departments. The youth was claiming that they do not have enough information about job opportunities so that they do not even have the chance to apply for certain jobs.

Looking at reports of international organizations like the ILO or the OECD/UNDP/African Development Bank, this inadequate job matching is indeed a problem that unemployed youth is facing, especially the disadvantaged one. There is a lack of information flow between the job seekers and hiring employers in a lot of African countries according to the African Economic Outlook 2012. This is especially apparent for youth with little education as they seem to know less about where to look for jobs and therefore need more help finding one. This again causes a challenge as it has been shown that job search assistance works mainly for individuals with sufficient education and better labour market prospects (African Economic Outlook [AEO], 2012, Labour market information and matching – a problem for disadvantaged youth). Another barrier that the youth is facing in this regard is that a lot of job seekers are unable to communicate or signal their level of skills to a potential employer (ILO, 2012, p. 26). A possible explanation for this is the poor qualification framework existing in a lot of African countries which leads to the outcome that employers are not able to read and understand diplomas and certificates. Those findings match the current situation of youth in Uganda, especially the disadvantaged ones coming from a poor background (like the students of the PYC) who have weaker access to job networks and social capital.

Fontes Foundation has already reacted to this challenge at the Potentiam Youth Development Centre with a first concept note draft for the “Potentiam Recruitment Hub” earlier last year. After the youth has absolved the core course at the PYC, they are equipped with ICT, Business and English skills and (even more importantly), they have a very good attitude towards working. Even though those skills make them highly employable and most of the first two core course rounds have found employment5, the number of students at the centre are increasing, therefore increasing the risk of future unemployment of the youth graduates. This is why Fontes Foundation was planning a recruitment hub for former students, where

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5 The training program of the Potentiam Youth Development Centre and the positive impact it has on the lives of the benefiting youth will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4.
they get support in finding a job by a recruitment advisor which is giving inputs to their CVs, making mock interviews and holding workshops about job opportunities. The recruitment hub will also give the students online access to a data base with employers in it and their vacancies and job offers (Fontes Foundation, 2013, p. 3). As this is just a first draft in the planning stage, this idea of making the connection between youth job seekers and employers through a recruitment hub will be picked up again in chapter 5 when proposing improvements for the Fontes Foundation youth program.

3.1.6. Low level of aggregate demand for labour in the economy

As a lot of scholars and international organizations are claiming (e.g. Chigunta 2002, ILO 2012, Haile 2003, Kellow 2010), it is not enough to just look at the supply side of labour (employees that are offering their work force) when discussing unemployment, but also at the demand side of labour (employers looking for work force for their economic activities). Especially in phases of economic downturn or slow economic growth, the demand for labour is reduced as the economic performance is slowing down, accompanied by low levels of private sector investment, insufficient trade dynamism and less start up activity (ILO, 2012, p. 24). But the situation gets particularly difficult for youth, as they are often found at the end of the “job queue”: Employers are discriminating against the inexperienced youth in the face of relatively abundant adult labour, so that it is especially difficult for youth to find a job in such times (Haile, 2003, p. 6).

Uganda has an estimated economic growth rate of 6.2 % for 2014/2015, and was having a similar growth rate over the last couple of years. This number is decent and therefore one cannot talk about an economic downturn, so this theory of low aggregate demand for labour in the economy because of low economic growth does not really apply to Uganda in the current phase of its economy. It seems as if this is less an issue for Uganda, at least at the moment. But as it will be discussed in chapter 3.1.6., the economic growth is still too small to compensate for the fast-growing population in the country, which is another important reason for youth unemployment.

Another reason why the issue of a low demand for labour is less relevant for this thesis is that demand side reasons for youth unemployment are very difficult to fight for a single youth development organization like Fontes Foundation. A single organization cannot seriously influence the economic performance of a whole nation and has to accept the economic circles the way they are appearing. It makes therefore much more sense to focus on the supply side reasons for youth unemployment which are directly concerning the attitudes, capabilities and skills of the youth if an organization like Fontes wants to have an impact in the fight against youth unemployment. It was nonetheless important to mention this issue as it shows that there are not only problems on the side of training the youth for the job market, but also on the demand side of the employers or the economy at large.

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6 This does not mean that this theory is not applicable for Uganda in general, an economic downturn can come quickly and then the Ugandan youth sees itself confronted with this problem.
3.2. Social/cultural reasons

3.2.1. Demographic development and population growth

The high population growth is very often considered a major factor for youth unemployment on the macro level of African countries (e.g. Kellow 2010, Young Leaders Think Tank 2010, East African Community n.d., WEF 2013, Haile 2003). As it has been already discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis, the population in Sub-Saharan Africa is growing massively due to the very high fertility rates. It has been shown that Uganda is one of the fastest growing and most fertile countries in the world, which means that this problem especially affects this country.

The trend into this direction will most likely continue during the next 3-4 decades according to today’s predictions. According to the "World’s Population Data Sheet 2013" from USAID’s Population Reference Bureau, Uganda will face a population of 114 million people in 2050 (Population Reference Bureau [PRB], 2013, p. 8). This means that more and more youth will flow into the Ugandan labour market, either looking for employment or trying to become self-employed.

This does not have to be something negative per se, as a growing population is an important factor for economic growth and development according to classic economic theories (population growth increases labour L as part of the production function) and scholars like Kuznets, Boserup and Simon suggested that there are many possible positive effects of population growth like economies of scale, cheaper communication or the acceleration of technological progress (Ali, Ali & Amin, 2013, pp. 3-4). But the growing population and as a result of it the growing percentage of people in a population looking for a job has to be absorbed by the economy of the country, meaning that the economy has to grow fast enough to create enough jobs for all those new job seekers. But whenever the rate of population growth (supply of labour) exceeds that of economic growth (demand for labour), the unemployment rates will increase (Nnadozie, 2003, p. 115).

Even though the Ugandan economy has an estimated GDP growth rate of 6.2 % in 2014/2015 which is expected to remain stable over the following years (World Bank, 2015, Uganda overview), it will not be high enough to absorb the population growth rate of 3.2 % per year, as the high youth unemployment rate discovered in 2013 by ActionAid (see chapter 2) has shown.

According to one view in academics, population growth is not responsible for increased unemployment but other factors like underdevelopment, world resource depletion, population distribution or the subordination of women due to the economic, social and cultural situation in a country (Ali et al. 2013, p. 3). One may agree or disagree with this point of view (the scope of this paper does not allow a deeper discussion of this), but it can probably be said that a fast growing population aggravates the unemployment problem in a country that is already struggling with finding enough employment for its citizens as more and more people are entering the job market looking for employment. Based on the research and
observations made so far in this thesis, increased unemployment mostly affects the youth in Uganda. The conclusion is drawn that even though it is uncertain if population growth is a direct cause of youth unemployment in Uganda, it definitely aggravates the problem. This rapid population growth in Uganda was also observable by the author during the day-to-day life in Uganda. One sees pregnant women everywhere in the streets or mothers with new-born babies on their back. During the weekends, the roads are flooded with wedding convoys, which will most likely lead to a lot of children given the Ugandan traditional culture of having a lot of children, which expresses itself in the high average fertility rate of almost 6 children per woman. Furthermore, there were also baby showers and baptisms taking place all the time in the social environment of the author. The number of young children and babies is especially striking while moving around in rural areas. During implementation and follow up field trips of its water and education projects in South-Western Uganda, the Fontes Foundation team is always accompanied by a huge number of children of all ages. This has been especially striking when compared to the day-to-day life in a Western society like Switzerland, where such events are happening more and more rarely and do not seem as omnipresent as in Uganda.

The explanation for this rapid population growth can be directly found in the Ugandan culture. Especially in rural areas (which are generally more traditional), a man’s social status is determined by how many children he has. The father of one of Fontes Foundation’s scholarship students, who is a poor fisherman, has 34 children from 5 different wives, which brings him a lot of respect in the fishing village of Kisenyi (even though he cannot even provide the financial resources for a proper education of one of his children). Examples like this contribute to the understanding why Uganda has such a high fertility rate of roughly 6 children per woman. As long as such cultural perceptions proceed, it is very unlikely that the population growth rate in Uganda will slow down anytime soon.

3.2.2. Lack of parental guidance and career guidance at school

The lack of parental guidance (both in relation to a youth’s career but also in general) has been mentioned in both focus group discussions at the PYC as well as from several interviewees that absolved the core course. Brenda Namuli for example sees parental negligence as an important reason for youth unemployment as a lot of Ugandan parents produce too many children so that they cannot properly take care of them, especially when it comes to paying the fees for education (personal communication, December 15, 2015). William Ochieng sees the main problem in the fact that in a lot of Ugandan families, children do not get the chance to develop and practise the abilities where there are good at. Certain activities (like playing music instruments and dancing in William’s case) are considered a waste of time in the eyes of the family and he would have never been allowed to focus his educational and professional training in this direction (personal communication, December 15, 2015). As the parents are paying for the education of their children, they decide what is best for them and send them to study law or ICT as they think that this is more promising to make
a living according to their knowledge, regardless of the interests of their children. Mohammed Kinene is also putting the responsibility on the parents as “they should not allow their children to be lousy”, to express it in his own words (personal communication, December 15, 2015). If children or youth do misbehave, the parents have to do something against it and bring them back on the right path. Even though Mohammed’s point of view is definitely important, parents should already influence their children’s behaviour from early childhood onward and should not only act “correctively”.

As the literature about parental negligence in Uganda is nearly inexistent, work from other African countries (which have very similar problems like Uganda regarding their youth) have been examined to see if there is some academic literature confirming those claims of the Ugandan youth. Wadesango, Chabaya, Rembe and Muhuro came to the conclusion that a lot of parents or guardians do not show responsibility towards their children. The parents also do not seem to care where their kids are spending their time and (almost more importantly) with whom. The youth also has a lack of role models as their parents are very often misbehaving and fighting with each other and also do not interfere when their children are behaving in a bad way by fighting with other children or even being involved in criminal activities like theft (Wadesango, Chabaya, Rembe & Muhuro, 2011, p. 153). Parents also think more and more that it is the educator’s duty alone to discipline their children and to educate them properly. The responds that some parents gave to the scholars mentioned above sound as if they are totally indifferent towards their children or that they have given up on trying to be good parents.

Regarding career guidance, Udoh and Sanni find that Nigerian parents’ attitudes towards a certain occupation, the level of their formal education as well as their occupation have a significant influence on the career choice of their children, supporting William’s view that the parents have the final word about which career path their son or daughter is pursuing (Udoh & Sanni, 2012, p. 503).

Besides weaknesses in parental guidance, various authors and reports (e.g. ILO, 2012, p. 26, Uganda Youth Manifesto, 2010, p. 5, DG Murray Trust, (n.d.), Addressing the issues of unemployment and poor career guidance) are criticizing the lack of career guidance at schools and universities. High schools graduates are leaving the school with limited knowledge regarding future careers, other institutions of learning and possible opportunities in the area of apprenticeships, so they have the perception that university is the best (or even the only) option to be successful in life, which is rooted in insufficient career guidance.

This lack of career guidance can be strongly confirmed by the author’s work experiences in Uganda. In Fontes Foundation’s scholarship program, which supports most disadvantaged children to achieve a secondary as well as a tertiary education, it takes a lot of effort and explanation to both the children and the parents to convince them that university is not the
best way to make a successful livelihood in their case\textsuperscript{7}. While Fontes strongly believes that they should participate in vocational training (like electrical wiring, computer science or tailoring), the perception is deeply rooted in the children’s and parents mind that university is the only road to success and everything else is considered a failure. This perceived “necessity” of holding a university degree was also identifiable during the interviews with the former core course students of the PYC: Those that made it through high school (with a lot of financial struggles already at that point) all joined university afterwards, only to drop out after the first year because of lack of funds, and therefore wasting time and resources that could have been used otherwise. This misperception leads to the outcome that the Ugandan education system generates much more university graduates than the economy can absorb, leading to the result that a lot of highly educated youth ends up in unemployment or in low-skilled and low-paid jobs.

\textbf{3.2.3. Corruption, nepotism and tribalism}

One issue that has been mentioned by former core course students as well as the two focus group discussions is nepotism/tribalism as well as the overall level of corruption in the Ugandan society. The youth agrees that it is all about connections when applying for a job. What is deterring if you get a job are not your qualifications or your degrees and certificates but if you know the person which is in charge of the recruitment process. This has the effect that very often, unqualified people end up getting a job, even though there would have been a candidate which is more suitable. There seemed to be a high level of frustration with such practices among the PYC youth. Youth without those important social connections will get discouraged after too many negative experiences to apply for further jobs as they get the impression that all employers are the same.

There was also a vivid discussion during the second focus group discussion about tribalism, especially in government jobs. Some students claimed that being affiliated with a certain tribe determines if you get a job in the government administration or not. For example, a Banyankole, from the tribe of which the Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni is coming from, has a much higher chance of getting assigned to a government post than for example somebody from the Acholi tribe in the north or the Bagisu in the east of the country. Not everybody in the core course agreed with this (as they were probably from the Banyankole tribe themselves), but the general tendency was in favour of this statement.

This perception of the PYC students about corruption and all the negative effects it implies (nepotism, tribalism or religious biases) is shared by the Ugandan population. According to Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index 2014, Uganda is ranked 142 out of 175 countries (Transparency International, 2015, p. 5). Uganda steadily dropped further down over the last couple of years from rank 127 in 2010 to where it is today. In the Global

\footnote{\textsuperscript{7} For more information about Fontes Foundation’s stance on university/vocational education, please read the “Is University the Only Road to Success?” article from the Fontes Newsletter February 2014 under http://fontes.no/foundation/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/FontesNewsFeb14.pdf.}
Corruption Barometer 2013, 55 % of the Ugandans asked replied that corruption has increased a lot over the past two years. 37 % of respondents also indicated that they feel that Ugandan businesses are corrupt or extremely corrupt, which is line with what the PYC students think about corruption in the business world (Transparency International, 2013, GCB 2013 – Uganda). As in most African countries, the lack of a feeling for national unity and patriotism (which is very often blamed on the colonial power which superimposed the European state model onto African societies) leads to the fact that people do not identify with the nation state but with their local communities (Poku & Mdee, 2011, p. 42-43), which is fuelling corruption, nepotism and tribalism in the business world.

The reoccurring top level corruption scandals like the one at the office of the prime minister in 2012, where 10 million Euros destined for a development program have been diverted to private accounts, are another sign that corruption is highly present in Uganda. This incident also had serious financial consequences for the government's development programs, as several big donor countries (amongst others the UK, Denmark, Ireland and Norway) have suspended their development aid payments to Uganda completely because of this incident (Al Jazeera, 2012, UK suspends Uganda aid over corruption). Even though a big chunk of this money is not ending up at the youth anyway because of corruption, state-financed youth development programs in Uganda are experiencing a lack of funds, and the youth on the ground is finally suffering the consequences in the end.

Regarding tribalism, The Independent, a Ugandan newspaper, made a survey of the 425 top government appointments in the Ugandan government (e.g. ministers, permanent secretaries, presidential advisors as well as the top leadership of the police, the army and the prison authority) and found evidence for the ongoing tribalism under the Museveni government. Out of the 425 positions, 181 are held by people from Western Uganda, Museveni's place of origin. 107 positions are held by people from the Central region (which are mainly Baganda, the biggest tribe in Uganda), leaving only 68 positions for the North and 69 positions for the East (The Independent, 2014, The monster of tribalism). The survey reveals that the people from the West are not only the head of those institutions, but that they also have the largest share of the top jobs in all the surveyed entities. The president, who is in charge of those appointments, is justifying this by claiming that people from the West have supported him most in his bush war struggles in the 70's and 80's, which sounds like a justification for tribalism that should not count anymore after 30 years. These allegations get reinforced by Roger Tangri and Andrew Mwenda in their case study of corruption in Uganda by claiming that the president is upholding his political power through the allocation of public positions and resources to keep leaders and state officials together, personally appointing family members and tribesmen for public office and shielding his supporters against the persecution of corruption (Tangri & Mwenda, 2013, pp. 164-165, 169-173).

The author can confirm that nepotism seems to be deeply rooted within the Ugandan society according to the experiences made: The Fontes Foundation field staff is trying to install their relatives whenever a new position gets available, causing problems with other field staff.
Whenever one needs a mechanic, somebody “knows someone who is very good at doing this”, which turns out to be the person’s brother in law or cousin. Or employees are warmly recommending candidates for positions which turn out to be friends or family members as well. Those are just some examples for situations where nepotism plays a role in the Ugandan society.

It is also important to mention though that nepotism is not a direct reason for youth unemployment. It rather leads to a suboptimal and inefficient allocation of jobs as in the end, somebody is getting the job and therefore gets employed, even though this person is not the most suitable for the position. What can be said though is that nepotism has an indirect effect on youth unemployment as it discourages a lot of youth to look for jobs, therefore keeping them unemployed. Corruption also leads to a misallocation of entrepreneurial talent into activities that carry individual benefit, but has destructive or unproductive consequences for society at large (Osalor, 2011, p. 61).

3.3. personal/individual reasons

3.3.1. Negative attitude of youth

An interesting result of the interviews and the two focus group discussions carried out within the framework of this master thesis is that a lot of the (former) youth centre students are giving the blame to the youth itself when it comes to youth unemployment. The students of the core course class of the PYC all agreed that the youth very often have a negative attitude towards work, which expresses itself in general laziness (to find a job and to work), a lack of motivation to work, a lack of ambition and self-drive to achieve something and the lack of a clear vision for life (Focus group discussion, 2014b). The youth also became too picky regarding certain jobs, they all want to work in offices to avoid hard physical labour. According to Brenda Namuli from the second round of the core course, This type of youth is looking for quick money without making an effort which is why they are turning towards sports betting, which is a huge social problem in Uganda (personal communication, December 15, 2015). Denis Ssebugwwo makes the interesting point that a lot of youth in Uganda, but also in Africa in general, still have the mentality “of being given instead of working for themselves and earning a living, there is always the hand that begs!” (personal communication, December 15, 2015).

This negative perception of the attitudes of today’s youth in Uganda is shared by the employers that have been interviewed for the FF assessment study. There was a strong trend among employers that the youth today is lazy and not willing to work hard. They lack a vision, motivation and interest in life, and all they think about is money (FF, 2011b, p. 13). Being a professional employee or doing a good job is not motivation enough for the youth,

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8 According to her, this also goes back to parental negligence, which will be discussed separately later in this chapter.
they lack an intrinsic motivation, and the employers have to find other ways (mostly monetary one’s) to motivate their young staff.

Fred Muwema, a popular and successful lawyer in Kampala, Uganda, is not only accusing the youth of this negative behaviour, but the overall population of Uganda. He claims that “unfortunately, this negative attitude is deeply ingrained in our socio-cultural mind-set” (Daily Monitor, 2011, Youth require attitude change more than money). According to him, a positive attitude towards work is as important for productivity as other economic factors like capital, raw materials or technical capabilities. Merely equipping youth with technical business skills and capital will not create jobs for the youth unless they gain a proper attitude towards the efficient management of time, resources, expectations and failure.

The author can only partly confirm the claims that have been made by the youth centre students, the employers interviewed and Mr. Muwema. On the one hand, there are a lot of youth with this “being given” or begging mentality instead of trying and make their own living, especially when interacting with white people. But on the other hand, the author experienced a lot of youth that is hard working and is trying desperately to find a job and therefore a way out of unemployment. A lot of youth would even offer their labour for free in the form of volunteering or an internship just to acquire some work experience.

What can definitively be confirmed is Mr. Muwema’s claim that a positive attitude towards work is at least as important for the youth as for example business skills and capital. It can indeed be observed to a large degree that Ugandans have a different (in the “West”, we would probably say negative) attitude towards work like we are used to it for example in Switzerland, which has several cultural and economic reasons. And on the other hand, as mentioned in subchapter 3.3. and 3.4., the youth very often lacks the skills required for a certain job. Because of this, Fontes Foundation for example recruits new staff members almost uniquely on the basis of attitudes. When those work morals and ethics are right in a person, the practical skills necessary for the job can be taught “on-the-job”. This also goes for youth that already have the technical skills for a job: the best welding or plumbing skills are not helping when the person is always an hour late, steals company/organization property or makes up fake sicknesses to get sick leave. It is therefore crucial to invest into attitude/behavioural change together with professional (vocational) skill training to have a real impact.

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9 This will not be discussed in detail because of the scope of the thesis, but some reasons for the Ugandan work ethics are the importance of family (if your kid is sick, you stay at home as well, or if your cousin 3rd grade dies, you go to his/her burial under all circumstances, even if it is a day’s travel away), the unimportance of the concept of time/punctuality, a negative work environment which causes a lack of motivation (low salary, “mean” supervisors, etc.) or a general lack of attention to details.
4. Case study: Fontes Foundation’s youth program

After the main reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda have been established in the last chapter, the rest of this thesis will switch focus to how urban youth unemployment in Uganda can be fought or mitigated. As this paper should be of direct practical relevance for an active implementer of youth development and given the limited scope of this paper, the focus will lie on the already above mentioned small and specialized not-for-profit Non-Governmental Organization called Fontes Foundation. As already mentioned in the introductory chapter of this thesis, the purpose is to give practical advice to a youth development NGO and not to give policy advices on government level or to the development aid community at large. With this approach, the author is totally aware that the scope of his contribution is limited to a small entity and will not battle youth unemployment on a large scale in Uganda. But instead of further contributing to the already rich literature of (sometimes overly ambitious and even naive) policy advices on the national/international level which only had very limited impact so far, an attempt is made to have a relevant practical impact on the organizational level of a small youth development NGO.

4.1. Fontes Foundation and Fontes Foundation Uganda – A brief introduction

Fontes Foundation is a small, specialised and innovative not-for-profit Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) based in Norway with its daughter organization Fontes Foundation Uganda. The organization is actively implementing projects since 2004 in Uganda and Mozambique and is active in the areas of water/sanitation, education and youth development (FF, 2014a, p. 1).

Fontes Foundation started its activities in 2004 by implementing small piped water schemes in different fishing villages in Queen Elizabeth National Park in South-western Uganda. An important policy of Fontes Foundation is a high level of community involvement in carrying out the projects, especially in the water area. The local communities (which are also the beneficiaries) are involved from day 1 by participating in the planning and the set-up of a water scheme, and are running the system through an elected water committee afterwards. (FF, n.d., Community involvement). All this happens in close collaboration and coordination with the local political authorities as well as the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). After the implementation, Fontes Foundation’s role is to provide capacity-building sessions and trainings to the water committees as well as giving them advice on how to solve certain problems and is therefore not directly involved in the management of the water systems.

Besides the provision of drinking water, Fontes Foundation shares the view that education is key to development and also supports Nursery and Primary Schools and is running a scholarship program on the secondary/tertiary education level. Save drinking water is only considered an entry point into the communities to further contribute towards the overall development of the communities (FF, n.d., Community involvement). Besides that, Fontes is running a youth centre in the capital Kampala, but this will be discussed in more detail in
the next subchapter. Fontes Foundation only uses appropriate technology with locally available spare parts so that the long-term maintenance of the system is possible for the communities. The organization gets financial and technical support from Fontes AS, a consultancy spin-off with a lot of expertise in both disaster and development aid management (Fontes Foundation, 2011a, p. 1).

Another important pillar of Fontes Foundation’s policy is sustainability. This word has been overused in the development sector in the past, but Fontes has its own understanding of it. Only with a long term commitment of at least 10 years and constant follow-up and capacity-building for the local people involved in the projects, Fontes Foundation can stand in front of its donors with its head up and tell them that the projects are actually sustainable. This implies higher costs of course, which donors are not always willing to pay, but without proper training of the people to make them capable of maintaining the water projects themselves, the chances that those projects will still be running after 2-3 years is small.

Fontes Foundation is constantly learning through research and thereby contributes towards the water and sanitation, the emergency as well as the development sector in general. The organization is constantly monitoring and evaluating its projects to learn lessons and improve the management of actual and the implementation of future projects. Fontes Foundation is also participating regularly at national and international events to share the information gathered with other practitioners, donors and governments (FF, n.d., Research).

4.2. Fontes Foundation’s youth program

In this subchapter, the youth program of Fontes Foundation, more specifically the Potentiam Youth Development Centre (PYC), will be described in more detail. This is necessary as it is important to understand the “state of the art at the youth centre” before making any suggestions for improvement in the next chapter.

4.2.1. The Potentiam Youth Development Centre (PYC)

The Potentiam Youth Development Centre has been established by Fontes Foundation in 2011 on request and in collaboration with a local youth group called Tukole as a way to fight the serious problem of youth unemployment in Uganda, more specifically in Kampala, a problem which has been discussed in chapter 2 of this paper. The PYC “seeks to empower disadvantaged youth in Kampala (Uganda) to become productive members of society, either as entrepreneurs or as valued employees” (FF, 2012, p. 1). An assessment study has then been carried out by Fontes Foundation in the same year where a youth workshop as well as interviews with a wide variety of employers have been held to find out what the youth

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10 To learn more about the technologies used by Fontes Foundation, please go to http://fon-tes.no/foundation/water/ and read the section “Appropriate technology”.

11 “Disadvantaged youth” according to Fontes Foundation means those youth that dropped out of secondary school and that are coming from a poor background, meaning that they cannot afford going back to school.
is specifically lacking and what the employers are looking for. It turned out that the employers interviewed are not giving too much emphasis on the actual skills of the specific jobs but more on the attitude of a future employee, e.g. honesty, loyalty, being hard-working and reliability (FF, 2011b, p. 14-15). In addition, the assessment study showed that independently of the specific job, Ugandan youth lacks business management knowledge and an entrepreneurial understanding as well as proper career guidance both at home as well as at school (FF, 2011b, p. 25).

On this basis, Fontes Foundation developed a curriculum for the PYC that focuses on Mentorship, Personal Development and Applied Business Skills. The six months full time core course is containing the courses Business English, Applied Business Skills, Applied ICT and Personal Development and aims at students that already absolved at least one or two years of secondary school (FF, n.d., Youth Development). Personal Development aims at changing the often negative attitude of the youth (they lack self-confidence, are always late, are not committed and do not know how to communicate) so that they can acquire the attitudes mentioned above and transform them into valuable business men/women or reliable employees. The business skills, ICT and English lessons are all focused on knowledge that is specifically needed to open up a small business. As the final exam, all core course students have to hand in a business plan, where they have to include everything that they have learned during the past six months. For the students that have no secondary education yet, the centre offers two months part-time short courses in ICT and Basic English and Literacy where they can learn the basics required to join the core course afterwards. An overview over the core course at the PYC is presented in Figure 3.

![Figure 3: Overview over PYC core course (source: FF, 2012, p. 2)](image)

To make sure that the students get proper career guidance and general advice for life, each core course student gets a personal mentor at the beginning of the course. Those mentors meet regularly with the students to help them with their business plan as well as being a confidant for them. After the six months at the centre, the mentorship program continues for the student for another one and a half years. During that time, Fontes Foundation is also following up the students regularly within the monitoring and evaluation framework, which is important for the quality control as well as for the impact measurement of the whole program.
Besides the actual classes, the PYC also offers recreational activities for the students as well as for other youth in the area. For youth interested into sports there is the “PYC Football Team”, which has training sessions three times a week on a football pitch in the close neighbourhood of the centre. For those that are more into music, dancing or acting, there is the “Fontes Cultural Troupe”, a Music, Dance and Drama (MDD) group that is practising two times a week at the youth centre and also has performances at functions like weddings or baptisms (FF, n.d., Youth Development). Both the football team as well as the MDD group are important student recruitment mechanisms for the PYC courses as it attracts the target youth to the centre that are seeking a leisure time activity but are then often joining the training courses.

4.2.2. Successes and challenges of the PYC

After the introduction into Fontes Foundation and its Potentiam Youth Development Centre, both the successes that the PYC achieved as well as the challenges that it faces should be discussed in this sub-chapter. This should show where the Youth Centre is already strong and where it has some room for improvement. While the successes of the centre are quite well documented by the organization, the challenges presented here are mostly observations of the author during his 1.5 years of work for Fontes Foundation in Uganda.\textsuperscript{12}

\textbf{Successes}

The major success of the Potentiam Youth Development Centre after its first two years of operations is that it fulfils its purpose: reducing the number of unemployed youth in Kampala. Fontes Foundation’s monitoring and evaluation of the youth centre showed that at the end of 2013, 147 youth have absolved either short or core course trainings at the PYC. Regarding the core course (two round have been graduated at that point), the graduation rate was 92 \%, which is above the average of youth development centres at large, with a dropout rate of 15 \%. But even more importantly, 82 \% of the core course graduates found employment within the first three months of graduation (FF, 2014c, p. 3). This number is exceptionally high and given the difficulties of finding a job in Uganda (as discussed in previous chapters of this thesis), it is a remarkable achievement. Figure 4 presents the most important findings of the first PYC evaluation after 1.5 years of running the project.

\textsuperscript{12}While the occupation as Regional Coordinator gave the author a good overview over the management challenges of the whole organization (including the PYC), the volunteering allowed him to get a deep insight into the PYC at “grassroots level”."
On top of that, evaluations have showed that all of the students have a higher self-confidence after absolving the courses at the youth centre. The main reasons are the business skills that they attained during the course, but even more importantly, the personal development lessons that boosted the student’s communication skills as well as their self-esteem (FF, 2014c, p. 4). The increased self-confidence of the students has also been shown during the interviews carried out by the author with the former core course students: Almost all interviewees replied that one of the main benefits they got from the PYC is their increased self-esteem as well as the ability to speak in front of a crowd or “important” people.

According to the Youth Program Coordinator of Fontes Foundation, Apiyo Oweka-Laboke, the PYC’s success is rooted in its holistic approach and the quality of services provided. The close involvement of and the interaction with the local authorities, the PYC staff, the mentors and the community at large is key to a successful community program like the Potentiam Youth Development Centre (FF, 2014b, p. 3).

**Challenges**

As already mentioned above, this section contains the most urgent challenges that the Potentiam Youth Development Centre is facing after its first two years of operations:

**Failure to offer access to credit for students to finance their business plans:** As an idea for future expansion, the youth centre assessment study of 2011 suggests that Fontes Foundation finds a way to provide a service for students which grants them access to start-up capital for the implementation of their business plan (FF, 2011b, p. 32) This has not happened yet. As the students are working on their business plans for months and as they acquire a lot of entrepreneurial and business skills during the core course, they are highly motivated to start up an own business after their studies at the youth centre. As they have no access to credit or other financial means and Fontes Foundation lacks the funding for it as well, only a small percentage of the students can open up their own businesses directly.

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*Figure 4: Impact of the PYC core course on the employment situation of graduates (source: FF, 2014b, p. 3)*
after their studies at the PYC. The students are practically forced to look for employment, which is less beneficial for the overall economic development and the fight against unemployment than creating new businesses. It also has a demotivating effect on the youth as they get motivated to open up their own small business for six months and then lack the resources to do it.

**No routinized procedures for student mobilization:** One of the main concerns after the first two rounds of core courses at the PYC was the low amount of students participating in the program. Even though the numbers have increased since then as mobilization efforts have been improved, a routinized procedure for student mobilization is still lacking. Tukole Youth Group as well as other youth groups that have been involved for mobilization have turned out to be only of limited use and only bring in a limited number of students, especially for the English short course and the core course. A lot of mobilization is carried out by PYC staff, especially the Administrative Assistant Denis Ssebugwawo. Even though it is positive that the staff is committed to the mobilization efforts, the youth centre management is in need of finding a way to “routinize” the mobilization procedure without sending around its staff from school to school and church to church, which is a time-consuming and inefficient way for mobilization.

**Shortage of funds for PYC because of the weak Norwegian Kronor:** The Norwegian Kronor (NOK) considerably devaluated towards the Ugandan Shilling (UGX) over the last two years. While one NOK was worth 461 UGX at the beginning of 2013, it is only worth 350 UGX today. As the youth centre donor, Balder Foundation, makes its donation in Norwegian Kroners, Fontes Foundation Uganda receives roughly 25 % less money in UGX for this year. As the Potentiam Youth Development Centre budget was already reduced to the absolute minimum in the beginning of 2014, the costs cannot be cut any further in the project. This means that either the donors have to be convinced to donate more money to continue with the program on the actual level or some of the services have to be reduced. As the second one is not really an option for the Fontes management as well as the donors, only an increase of donations can guarantee the proper running of the youth centre in the future.

4.3. Causes of youth unemployment addressable by FF’s youth program

After the main reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda have been established in chapter 4 and after the presentation of Fontes Foundation’s Potentiam Youth Development Centre, an overview should be made now over which of those reasons the Fontes Foundation youth program is already tackling, which ones it cannot tackle because it is not suited for it and – most importantly for the suggestions of improvement in the next chapter – which of the challenges the program could tackle in the future on top of what it is already doing.

**Rural-urban migration:** As rural-urban migration is a macro-level phenomenon that is taking place in Uganda for many decades and is going to continue happening, a small organization like Fontes Foundation does not seem to be well-suited to tackle this challenge. To
fight rural-urban migration effectively, it has to be tackled in the rural areas by improving the economic attractiveness there. As Fontes’ youth program is working in an urban setting in Kampala, it does not seem to make sense to try and fight this issue.

**Mismatch of skills:** The mismatch of skills between the skills the Ugandan education system provides and the ones the employers are looking for is already being addressed by the Potentiam Youth Development Centre. The courses are structured in a way that they are as practical as possible and as close as possible to the real business environment. The students also have a lot of motivational talks and capacity-building sessions with external experts from various fields (e.g. finance, personal branding, self-confidence development, etc.) to get first hand insights from the practical business world.

**Lack of entrepreneurship and management skills:** The PYC is already addressing the lack of entrepreneurship and management skills in the formal Ugandan education system. The centre is providing the strongly needed ICT, entrepreneurship and business skills that so many employers are looking for and that are also crucial for the students to become self-employed. The whole core course is focused around providing practically relevant skills that are important to equip the students with as they are handy in a lot of different professional fields, like fast typing on a computer, how to fill in a balance sheet, communication skills in English or the development of a business plan.

**Limited access to financial capital:** As it has already been discussed in subchapter 4.2.2., the PYC is lacking an element to provide its students with access to financial capital. Providing such financial capital to the students would be a viable program addition for the future to improve the services provided to the youth. How exactly such a program should be designed and how feasible it is will be discussed again and in more detail in chapter 5 where suggestions for improvements to the FF youth program are being made.

**Inadequate job matching:** The widely existing information gap between well trained youth looking for employment and employers who are looking for new employees is another potential possibility for the Potentiam Youth Development Centre to improve its services to the disadvantaged and unemployed youth. The recruitment hub which has been briefly presented in chapter 3 is one possibility for a new program addition at the youth centre. How such a service centre for matching job seekers and employer could exactly look like will also be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

**Low level of aggregate demand for labour in the economy:** It has already been discussed in chapter 3 that a small organization like Fontes Foundation is unsuitable to make changes to the aggregate demand for labour in a whole economy by influencing the economic performance of this country. The FF youth program should better focus on the supply side sources of youth unemployment which can also be influenced on a smaller scale, like reducing the mismatch of skills or improve the negative attitude of youth regarding work to improve their employability, instead of targeting at the demand side of labour.
Demographic development/population growth: Similarly to the last reason for youth unemployment discussed, it is very questionable if it makes a lot of sense for Fontes Foundation to try and fight this challenge. There is already a large number of development organizations that have specialised on family planning both in urban and rural Uganda, so FF would not really fill a gap when expanding its programs into this area. In addition, Fontes Foundation has no experience at all in family planning and would have to come up with a completely new program. As this thesis is about the improvement of Fontes’ youth program and the PYC in particular, family planning does not seem to be a suitable field to go into for Fontes Foundation.

Lack of parental guidance and career guidance at school: The lack of parental guidance cannot really be addressed by Fontes Foundation as the behaviour of the parents at home is outside of the reach of the organization. What the organization is already doing though is inviting the parents or the whole community respectively to the student capacity-buildings so that they can profit from the centre as well. What the FF youth program could do though is providing proper career guidance at the Potentiam Youth Development Centre. This could for example be done within the framework of the recruitment hub or as a separate program addition to the centre’s activities.

Corruption, nepotism, tribalism: As has been discussed in the last chapter, corruption, nepotism and tribalism are deeply embedded into the Ugandan society and are practised on all levels in politics and the economy. While the FF youth program has to accept those social circumstances on a macro level, it can however try to install values into their students to reduce this problem at least on a small scale. Anti-corruption is already an important part of the personal development class at the PYC.

Negative attitude of youth: Fontes Foundation has identified in its assessment study for the youth centre that the negative attitude of a lot of youth in Kampala is a major obstacle to employment according to the employers involved in the study. Therefore, the personal development classes which take place all Friday every week are an important pillar of the PYC training and are also one of the most beneficial for the students. They do not only learn a better attitude towards work but also learn a lot for life and about themselves, like their strengths and weaknesses, and they become much more self-confident.

Table 1 summarizes the reasons for youth unemployment in urban Uganda and if they are addressable for Fontes Foundation’s youth centre.
4.4. Alternative approaches – programs of other youth organizations

Before suggestions for improvements will be made in the next chapter for Fontes Foundation’s youth program and its youth centre, the approaches of other youth development organizations will be presented in this sub-chapter. The author selected those organizations on purpose as they all put the emphasis on other areas than the PYC. The idea of this presentation is to get some inspiration from other organizations to improve the youth program of Fontes Foundation.

4.4.1. Mengo Youth Development Link Vocational Training Centre

The Mengo Youth Development Link Vocational Training Centre has been established in 2008 by Mengo Youth Development Link, a local NGO based in the Mengo-Kisenyi slum in Uganda’s capital Kampala, which is one of the biggest slums in Kampala with an estimated population of 200,000 people. The vocational training centre has been established together with Youth Action International, a US-based international development NGO active in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Uganda.

The purpose of this youth centre program is to train the highly disadvantaged youth living in the Mengo-Kisenyi slums in professional traits like wood carving, making paper beads, tailoring and tie and dye material making (Youth Action International [YAI], 2011, p. 2). The classes take place on five days a week (it is therefore a full time programme) and each of

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for youth unemployment</th>
<th>Status at FF’s youth program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural-urban migration</td>
<td>Not addressable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mismatch of skills</td>
<td>Already addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of entrepreneurship and management skills</td>
<td>Already addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited access to financial capital</td>
<td>Addressable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate job matching</td>
<td>Addressable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low level of aggregate demand for labour in the economy</td>
<td>Not addressable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic development/population growth</td>
<td>Not addressable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of parental guidance as well as career guidance at school</td>
<td>Partly addressable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption, nepotism, tribalism</td>
<td>Already addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative attitude of youth</td>
<td>Already addressed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Reasons for youth unemployment and addressability by FF (own presentation)
them is facilitated by a professional trainer in the respective field (Mengo Youth Development Link [MYDEL], 2015, Vocational Training Centre). As a big part of the youth in this slum have dropped out of the education system during primary school, the training is easily understandable and as basic and practical as possible. A lot of the course participants are coming from rural areas in Uganda as they tried to find their fortune in the capital. Another big share are refugees from (formerly) conflict-prone countries like the DRC, South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia. This means that the educational level of the course participants is generally very low.

In the first three years of operations of the vocational training centre, 250 beneficiaries have participated in the centre’s training, of which 230 youth have graduated the one year training which equips them with a graduation certificate in the respective professional trait (YAI, 2011, p. 2). This graduation rate of 92% is above average of vocational training institutions and is quite surprising, given the fact that the programme is especially designed for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged youth in Kampala.

The Mengo Youth Development Link Vocational Training Centre has mainly be selected for this chapter as it has its main focus on very basic, locally demanded and simple vocational skills. The Potentiam Youth Development Centre has consciously abstained from pure vocational skills training at the time of its establishment as the assessment study showed that the attitude and general business skills/entrepreneur spirit of the youth seems to be more important attributes for employers. But this does not mean that vocational training should be excluded completely from the PYC program, a topic that will be picked up again in chapter 5.

4.4.2. Masaka Vocational and Rehabilitation Centre (MVRC)

The Masaka Vocational and Rehabilitation Centre (MVRC) has been established by the Ugandan Society for Disabled Children (USDC) in Masaka in the Southern Central region of Uganda, together with its sister youth centre in the West Nile Region, the Ocoko Vocational Rehabilitation Centre (OVRC). The goal of the centre is to make sure that “young people living with disability in Uganda are able to meet their full potential” (Uganda Society for Disabled Children [USDC], n.d., Our Projects). USDC has originally been founded in the UK in 1985 and is a registered local NGO in Uganda with the mission of promoting equal rights and equitable opportunities for children with disabilities through advocacy, capacity-building and rehabilitation (USDC, n.d., About Us).

The MVRC is providing vocational training to disabled youth to equip them with valuable practical skills. The centre offers courses in sewing, weaving, carpentry, leather work, screen printing and computer skills that are specifically tailored to people with disabilities. Since its establishment in 2000, more than a thousand youth has been trained in those professional traits. The products that are produced during the training is going to be sold by the students with the support of the MVRC to get additional resources for the training centre.
The vocational training gets supplemented with education in health and hygiene, social skills, HIV/AIDS and business skills. Besides its youth and education activities, the Masaka Vocational and Rehabilitation Centre is also active in community development through free advocacy services regarding income generating activities to the surrounding communities as well as an agricultural programme to teach the disabled and people with HIV/AIDS how to sustain themselves with agriculture and how to earn a living with it.

The interesting approach of this youth centre is that it focuses on a specific group of youth, in this case the physically and mentally disabled, instead of targeting the general youth. Like this, the organization fills a gap in tackling the problem of people with disabilities in Uganda, which is often a taboo topic to talk about in Ugandan society. Children with disabilities and their parents get very often stigmatized by society as being cursed or having a disease, so parents are trying to hide their disabled children and lock them away, instead of dealing with the situation and giving their child a chance in life (Terre des Hômes, 2007, p. 13). A disabled child is also considered as useless, a perception that can be fought by a youth centre like MVRC through equipping disabled youth with valuable skills that they can use in life.

4.4.3. The “Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents” (ELA) program

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is a Bangladesh-based development organization founded in 1972 which is today one of the world’s largest development organizations. Since 2006, BRAC is also active in Uganda, which became quickly one of its biggest project country for micro financing activities. As the micro financing is mainly done with disadvantaged women and micro business entrepreneurs, the organization implemented the Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents (ELA) program in several countries, including Uganda. The ELA program works in a way that it offers a safe space, so called clubs, for female adolescents (mostly between 16-21 years old) where they can build their social networks away from the constraints of their social environment. During those club meetings, they receive health education, confidence building as well as livelihood and business skills training to equip those girls and young women with the skills to open up their own small businesses (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee [BRAC], 2012, Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents).

To make sure that those young women can actually implement their business skills and ideas into practise, BRAC Uganda also has a strong focus on the financial component of it. The girls receive training in financial literacy and also get access to micro-loans provided by BRAC Uganda. Through experience, BRAC came to the conclusion that very often, social empowerment of young women cannot be reached without financial empowerment. The range of micro-loans for young women within the Microfinance Programme of BRAC is between 100 – 1000 USD (BRAC, 2014, p. 1). This is enough starting capital to open up a small micro-enterprise in Uganda, both in urban and rural areas. Even though there have been debates about the usefulness of giving loans to adolescent girls in the past, BRAC
found that with proper coaching, mentorship, financial literacy and livelihood training, micro loans are a very effective tool to empower female youth (BRAC, 2012, Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents).

An evaluation of the ELA program carried out by the World Bank showed a substantial increase (32% higher likeliness of engaging in income generating activities) of adolescent girls being in self-employment after the participation in the program, which shows that the programme is successful in reducing youth unemployment in Uganda. The programme also had a positive influence on sexual health, the reduction of teenage pregnancies and marriages as well as sexual abuse (World Bank, 2013, p. 2).

The reason why the ELA programme has been discussed here is because it actually adds a micro loan element to the training provided to the youth. With this system, the youth does not only get the skills and the knowledge to open up their own business, but also the financial resources to actually put it in practise. This element of micro financing is therefore relevant for this paper as one of the challenges at the Potentiam Youth Development Centre is exactly this lack of a funding mechanism for the core course graduates.

4.4.4. The Kasiisi Project’s “Conservation Education Program” (CEP)

The Kasiisi Project has been founded in 1997 to create a link between the Kibale Chimpanzee Project and the surrounding communities just outside Kibale Forest, but has grown into a big and permanent project focusing on education working in 14 schools which support 10,000 primary school children in the surroundings of Kibale National Park (Kasiisi Project, n.d., About/Need). The activities of the project are quite broad and include amongst others early childhood education, promoting conservation and health education as well as providing training for the school teachers.

The specific program that will be looked at in this thesis is the Conservation Education Program (CEP) of the organization. The area of activity of the Kasiisi Project is in the immediate neighbourhood of Kibale Forest which is the home of rare and endangered species like monkeys and forest elephants. As the human population around the forest is constantly growing, it is crucial to educate the local population in conservation. For this reason, the project has established so called Wildlife Clubs in all their schools, which are carrying out trainings, group meetings and a variety of educational activities in the field of both animal and environmental preservation (Kasiisi Project, 2014, p. 3). This includes field trips to the Kibale Chimpanzee Project with selected teachers to motivate them to teach more about wildlife preservation in their classes. The schools are also going for study trips to the Uganda Wildlife Education Centre in Entebbe, where they get guided tours and learn more about the different animals living in Uganda (Kasiisi Project, n.d., Conservation Education).

Besides that, the students are involved in water and waste management projects, where they get taught for example how to measure the water quality of a water source and to make recommendations afterwards of how to better manage the water sources available to their school. The students and their communities also receive education about environmentally
friendly technologies such as fuel-efficient cooking stoves, eco-bricks for construction and biogas for energy production. As an example, in 2014, students from some of the project villages built fuel-efficient, clean burning cooking stoves for their communities, therefore reducing the fuel costs and protecting the environment (Kasiisi Project, 2014, p. 3).

This project has been selected for this sub-chapter as it is focusing on education in the field of wildlife and environmental conversation. Especially at the moment where the Ugandan wildlife experiences a massive threat from poachers and environmental concerns are not very prominent across the country, it is important that the youth gets educated in those areas. They also have to understand that they do not just preserve for the sake of preservation but that they as individuals as well as their community benefit from it (especially financially), either in the form of tourism as an income generator or by saving fuel and energy costs.

4.4.5. Summary/Outlook

All the projects and programs presented in this subchapter have alternative approaches and a different focus (vocational skills, micro financing, preservation and disabled people) than what Fontes Foundation is doing within its Potentiam Youth Development Centre, even though they all have the same goal in the end, namely the empowerment of the youth. They should serve as a source of inspiration for the next chapter, where concrete suggestions for improvement and new project ideas will be developed.

4.5. Preliminary summary

So far, the reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda have been discussed as well as which of those reasons Fontes Foundation’s youth program is already tackling and which ones it could also tackle in the future. After that, alternative approaches have been discussed of how to support youth development in Uganda where organizations have been presented that have a different focus than Fontes Foundation. The analysis so far together with the suggestions for improvement from the PYC core course interviews and the focus group discussions as well as the personal experiences of the author after working for Fontes Foundation should provide a viable basis to make suggestions for improvements to the youth program of Fontes Foundation in Uganda.

5. Improvements, modifications and additions for FF’s youth program

In this chapter, suggestions for improvement should be proposed about how Fontes Foundation and more specifically the Potentiam Youth Development Centre can improve their fight against youth unemployment in Uganda on the basis of what has been analysed and discussed in the previous chapters. While the main goal is of course to contribute to a more efficient mitigation of youth unemployment in Kampala, organizational aspects regarding Fontes Foundation and its youth program will also be taken into consideration. This means that it will also be looked at the organization itself and how it can improve its procedures
and approaches (e.g. fundraising, marketing), as this increased efficiency and effectivity of the organization is also improving its capability to fight youth unemployment. Each sub-chapter also includes a challenges & limitations" part where possible challenges to the feasibility of the suggestions made will be critically discussed.

Even though the suggestions for improvement will be as concrete and practical as possible, they are not supposed to be already finished concept notes or project proposals that are designed into the last detail and ready for implementation because of the limited scope of this thesis. The suggestions should give ideas for new program adjustments which are feasible in the specific context of the FF youth program while also discussing the limitations of them. If the suggestions are seen as promising by the organization, the ideas have to be further developed and refined in the form of concept notes or project proposals.

5.1. Setting up of a funding scheme for PYC students’ business plans

As it has been discussed in chapter 3, the lack of access to financial capital is considered a major barrier that youth is facing in Uganda to open up their own business and therefore reducing unemployment. In chapter 4, one of the major flaws in the Potentiam Youth Development Centre program of Fontes Foundation is that they offer no possibility at all to their students to get start-up funding for their business plans. Given the focus on the applied business skills training as well as the presentation of a comprehensive business plan as the final exam of their studies at the PYC, this can lead to disappointment and frustration among the PYC graduates as they have been provided with the necessary skills, attitudes and the motivation to open up their own business, but they simply have no chance to access financial start-up capital after graduation, neither from Fontes Foundation nor from any other source.

There are basically two different designs to offer access to financial start-up capital for the youth in this case: Either Fontes Foundation provides the funds for this itself (option 1) or the organization starts a collaboration with a microfinance organization by connecting it to the PYC students.

5.1.1. Option 1: Fontes Foundation as the provider of start-up capital

Fontes Foundation could set up a microfinance program as an addition to its already existing youth development program. The microfinance program of an organization like BRAC can be taken as a basic role-model for this. BRAC is giving between 100-1000 USD in form of a collateral free loan mainly to women to start up a small business (BRAC, 2014, p. 1).

To specifically adjust this to the situation of urban Ugandan youth at the PYC, most budgets of business plans presented by the students so far had a capital requirement of between 500-1000 USD. Amounts that are considerably below 500 USD (for example only 100 or 200 USD) are limiting the possible types of businesses quite considerably, leaving only limited business areas for youth like for example catering, which are only requiring very little capital to start up on a small scale. But as margins on food are quite low in Uganda, to really
get some profit out of it and to be able to make a living, catering has to be up-scaled to a certain level, for which again more investments are necessary. Most business plans presented by the students though are requiring more start-up capital as they want to open up a boutique, a general store or a secretarial bureau.

Another element for such a microfinance program which is very crucial in the case of the PYC is that the loan has to be collateral-free. Youth in Uganda, especially in urban areas, have in most cases no possibility to provide any kind of securities like for example land, money or any other assets of value. To keep the program as sustainable as possible, the financial capital should get provided in the form of a loan and not of a grant to the youth. An appropriate and flexible repayment plan is also crucial for the success of such a microfinance program. As Akisimire has been discovering in his research about the state of the art of the microfinance sector (discussed in chapter 3.1.4. of this thesis), loan takers are complaining about the interest level being too high and the collection procedures of the MFI’s being too inflexible. This is especially true for the PYC youth, as they should only be charged a very small interest rate and they most likely also need some flexibility regarding paying back the loan as they will not have the money ready at all times. Therefore, the youth has to be guided and followed up properly by some kind of Microfinance Coordinator. The individual mentors from the mentorship program of the students should also be briefed about the loans so that they can support their protégés in managing the repayment.

Regarding the financing of the program, donor funds are needed in the beginning. Given the fact that two core course rounds are graduating each year with about 25 students on average, an annual amount of 25’000-50’000 USD is needed to provide this service to every single student. It is important to consider though that not every student at the PYC is the born business man/woman, a lot of them are also just looking for employment after their studies without the intention to really start up their business. Providing the services to only 20 students would reduce the cost to 12’500-25’000 USD, depending the size of loans the students are applying for. On top of that comes the salary for the Microfinance Coordinator (ca. 300 USD/month) as well as administrative costs (200 USD/per month), leading to project costs of around 20,000 and 35,000 USD per year. Even though the costs for the program will continuously getting smaller every year as loans are getting paid back over time, the program can probably not be run without any donor contributions when the interest rate is held on a low level. Figure 5 provides a graphic overview over the option 1 funding scheme.

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13 Those are of course rough estimates on the basis of the local salary level and the administration costs of other FF projects.
5.1.2. Option 2: Partnership with a Microfinance institution/NGO

The second option would be to connect the PYC students to microfinance institutions. Kiva Foundation for example is an NGO which provides microcredits to poor individuals in developing countries. Among other things, the organization works with partner organizations in developing countries which are connecting the borrowers and lenders from the Kiva online community (Kiva Foundation, 2014, pp. 2-6). The partner organization is responsible to make a due diligence (credit worthiness check) with the potential borrower and then posts the request for funds on the Kiva homepage where people from all around the world can lend money to the borrower.

Even though Fontes Foundation is probably not eligible for this partnership as a minimum amount of 50,000 USD of loans have to be posted on the Kiva page per year to become a field partner (which FF can probably not reach with the core course graduates alone given the proposed budgets of 500-1000 USD in the students business plans), such a partnership would be a viable way to provide the PYC graduates with the strongly needed start-up capital.

Fontes Foundation could act as a connector between microfinance organizations and the PYC students. The advantage of such a collaboration would be mutual for both the students and the MFI: Fontes Foundation is “supplying” the organization with students that are equipped with a proper and well thought through business plan as well as with the right attitude and skills to run a business and therefore reducing the risk of deficiency, and students are getting access to funding to start up their business. This second option is a more indirect one as no money would flow through Fontes Foundation directly, the NGO would just serve as an intermediator between the borrower and the lender. As most microfinance institutions are charging an interest rate, Fontes Foundation should be receiving a certain percentage of it to cover the administrative costs of linking the student to the MFI. Figure 6 provides a graphic overview over the option 2 funding scheme.
5.1.3. Benefits for Fontes Foundation

The main benefit for Fontes Foundation is that it can finally add the missing microfinance element to its program. The author got asked several times during his time in Uganda when talking about the youth centre and its courses why Fontes does not offer micro credits and how the organization can make sure that the youth can actually implement their business plans, for which the responses were always unsatisfying. With this microfinance element added, the PYC can actually make sure that the youth is able to start up their business plans, so that this effort of the students is not just hypothetical and the lack of funding is not forcing them into employment instead of self-employment\textsuperscript{14}. As the recruitment hub that will be discussed in chapter 5.4., this addition to the PYC would make sure that the students are not only trained, but that they are actually becoming productive after graduation.

5.1.4. Challenges and limitations

Regarding option one (Fontes-internal microfinance project), the main challenge will definitely be the fundraising of the lending capital during the first 2-3 years. Given the fact that the whole funding received for the PYC by Balder Foundation is roughly 55,000 USD per

\textsuperscript{14} This depends on the student of course, not everybody wants to be self-employed, some are looking for employment.
year (400,000 NOK), getting an additional amount of 20,000 – 35,000 USD just for the microfinance program could become a bit difficult. This challenge can be tackled by downscaling the microfinance program to about 5-10 students per core course class. In that case, the costs would be much lower as less loans, a smaller workload for the Microfinance Coordinator and less administrative costs would occur. Bringing down the costs to 10,000-15,000 USD (around 100,000 NOK) would be more viable to fundraise from donors in Norway or Switzerland given the amounts of donations received for other Fontes Foundation projects and programs. A limited amount of loans would also lead to increased competition among the core course students and therefore most likely leading to an increased overall quality of the business plans.

Another risk that has to be kept in mind is that not all of the loans are going to be repaid in the end. Even though the youth went through an attitude change, have acquired business skills and have a proper business plan ready, Fontes Foundation is still dealing with disadvantaged at-risk youth. It has happened multiple times during the author’s work in Uganda that some young people are dropping out of the course only few weeks before graduation and that they simply disappeared and could not be found anymore because they have to take care of a sick father or because they became pregnant. Such “strokes of fate” can also occur to the youth once they have opened up their businesses with the FF loans, which can lead to payment defaults.

Another challenge is to find a capable and committed Microfinance Coordinator in Kampala who has the necessary knowledge and professionalism, commitment to the youth and who is ready to work for a humble salary because of Fontes Foundation’s budget constraints.

Regarding option two (partnership with a microfinance organization), the most challenging part is to find a microfinance institution that is financing start-ups, that is not charging interest (or only a small one) and that is not asking for any kind of securities. Therefore, for-profit MFI’s are most likely out of the question as a start-up from a disadvantaged young person is considered as too risky for them. This has also been observed by the author after talking to different MFI’s, they are normally only giving micro-credits to small businesses that are already established for a while. A not-for-profit organization like Kiva or BRAC has to be found which is willing to support the youth without those conditions.

Another issue that has to be considered is the lack of financial benefit for Fontes Foundation with this approach. If only NGO MFI’s are considered an option for such a cooperation, it is questionable if they would be ready to pay FF something for their intermediary services. Even though this effort would help the youth to access start-up capital, it would only create additional costs and effort for Fontes Foundation. Having the increase of funds for the organization in mind, this alternative is less attractive than option one.

15 The additional costs and efforts will probably not be that large as the PYC core course students already have a proper business plan ready and the PYC management/facilitators know which of them are serious enough to run a business so they can recommend them to the MFI. But for pure business management reasons, this option is still only of limited attractiveness.
To sum up this sub-chapter quickly: Option one would be a viable and probably realizable possibility to give at least a limited amount of loans to the best-performing students of the course. This would also be attractive from a financial point of view as Fontes Foundation could acquire more funding with it, of which a part can be used to contribute to the coverage of the overhead costs of the organization, an issue which causes a constant headache to the management. Option two depends on the willingness of a not-for-profit MFI to partner up with FF. Even though it will probably not create huge additional costs, would be realizable and would help mitigating the problem of youth unemployment, this option is financially not too attractive for Fontes as it does not create additional funds. The author therefore suggest that Fontes Foundation is following up option one first and only considers option two in case option one turns out to be not implementable. What would be possible as well is that both options are run parallel, as the additional funds that are gained by implementing option one can contribute to cover the additional costs of option two.

5.2. Introduction of courses for specifically disadvantaged target groups

As has been discussed in chapter 4.4.2., certain youth development organizations are specifically working with disabled children and youth, like for example the Ugandan Society for Disabled Children (USDC). Disabled youth is an especially vulnerable group in Uganda (and all of Africa) because of the negative perception of people with disabilities in the country. According to the traditional beliefs of a lot of Ugandans, people with disabilities are considered useless and a shame for the family. This often leads to the fact that parents of disabled children try to hide them at home so that they do not get shunned by their community. Especially the mother is getting blamed of not being able to give birth to a “normal” child, and therefore is considered being cursed or sick. But by locking away the disabled child, parents deny those children the chance to unfold their full potential and to become productive members of society. This is unfortunate as most disabled people, may it be a physical or mental disability, are nonetheless talented in carrying out certain work and tasks. Having a program for disabled youth would therefore be a viable addition to the FF youth program as it targets the most vulnerable group among the youth, the disabled.

5.2.1. The “Disabled Youth Empowerment Program” (DYEP)

In this sub-chapter, some ideas should be collected and discussed of how such a program for disabled youth could look like at the Potentiam Youth Development Centre.

The first and most important issue that has to be discussed is the type of disabled youth the program is targeting at as this has a strong influence on the program design. If it is for example a physical disability (like for example the inability of using ones legs or the inability of using ones hands properly, which is very often caused by Polio in a country like Uganda), the courses offered for such a target group are limited to activities that those youth are still able to carry out. This is especially relevant for vocational courses where for example fully functioning hands or legs are needed. For example, tailoring is therefore not suited for polio patients with the inability to use their hands properly. On the other hand, people with a
disability like muteness or deafness are very well capable of absolving a vocational training in tailoring or carpentry or every other physical profession. What is important to consider in this case is that these disabled youth need specialised experts to train them as the facilitator has to be able to communicate in sign language. Last but not least, there is youth with mental disabilities. Depending on the severity of the disability, this target group would need a lot of care and assistance from the facilitator as well as from the PYC staff at large.

Another point to consider is the type of training that should be offered to the disabled youth considering the restrictions mentioned above. People with physical disabilities like Polio for example could just join the normal PYC courses without a lot of adjustments. But deaf or mute youth would require a separate course as they need a specially trained facilitator which knows sign language.

In the case of the PYC, it would probably not make too much sense to set up a program for mentally disabled youth as this requires too much expertise which Fontes Foundation and the youth centre do not have. It is questionable if the PYC can provide the right environment to properly take care of mentally disabled people. It is also not feasible to set up another core course just for mute and deaf youth, as all the different subjects (Applied Business Skills, Business English, Personal Development, etc.) need another teacher which can communicate in sign language, which would increase the costs considerably, making it more difficult to get adequate funding.

Therefore, two options would be still available: Offering one (or both) of the short courses especially for deaf or mute people or offering vocational courses that are specifically tailored to disabled youth (either physically disabled or deaf/mute). In the second case, it is recommendable that either the deaf/mute or the physically disabled (e.g. Polio) are considered as mixing the two groups would complicate the practical execution of the classes as everything has to be communicated in words as well as in sign language. To decide which group should be targeted, it would be helpful to carry out an assessment study in the surrounding areas of the PYC to see which group would be in higher need of such services. But given the fact that the physically disabled youth are able (at least to a certain degree) to participate in the normal courses of the centre, it would probably make more sense to address the deaf and mute youth as they had no possibility so far to benefit from the Potentiam Youth Development Centre.

What remains to be decided is if the program should consist of the short courses which have been offered so far at the PYC (Basic English and Literacy) or vocational training in certain areas like catering, tailoring or carpentry. What can be said is that the first option would definitely be cheaper as the only additional costs would be a facilitator, while the second option would also include materials for the vocational training courses.

16 Actually, a youth with Polio has attended a short course at the PYC last year and has successfully graduated from it without any further problems.
5.2.2. Benefits for Fontes Foundation

The main benefit for Fontes Foundation would be that the organization could diversify its funding sources by starting up a program with disabled youth. Like the Single Mothers Program (SMP) has shown with regard to gender/women’s issues, the Disabled Youth Empowerment Program (DYEP) would open up funding possibilities in the area of disabled people. There are various funds and organizations like the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability (UN Enable), the Christian Blind Mission (CBM) International or the Action on Disability and Development (ADD) that are specifically working with partner organizations in Uganda working in the area of disabled people. People with disabilities have also become a major focus of the development programs of many countries since the 80’s. Especially the Scandinavian governments have defined the mainstreaming of disability as a priority area in their development program with growing amounts of money going into this area every year over the last 15 years (Norad, 2012, pp. 14, 25). This would be a chance for Fontes to get funds from the Norwegian Development Agency Norad or from one of its implementing partners. Parts of this money will also contribute to cover the overhead costs of FF like office rent or car maintenance and would release some pressure from the already tight youth program budget of the organization.

Besides new funding opportunities, Fontes Foundation can also increase its network by going into new fields of development assistance. Being a pure water NGO in the beginning, Fontes Foundation added education and youth development projects to its activities, leading to the result that Fontes also got recognised in those circles by attending sector events and sharing information, best practises or lesson’s learned with other organizations. Starting a project for disabled youth would again increase FF’s awareness level which can lead to future collaborations with other NGO’s or to increased funding from donors specifically interested in the field of disability.

5.2.3. Challenges and limitations

One challenge Fontes Foundation could face when implementing a program for disabled youth is the infrastructure available at the Potentiam Youth Development Centre. As the centre consists of only two shipping containers and a roof to cover the area between the two containers arranged in a right angle, space for additional courses are going to be limited. The time table at the PYC has to be carefully re-organized to fit in one (or even two) additional courses specifically tailored for deaf and mute youth. This means in practise that courses have to be held on Mondays as well, which was the only day of the week without any classes. Even though there is still some capacity at the moment, the lack of space will sooner or later become a challenge, especially considering other suggestions for additional

17 Like most donor governments, Norway is reducing the numbers of organizations supported by Norad to focus the financial resources on fewer, bigger organizations to make their development aid efforts more efficient. Even though this makes it unlikely that Fontes will get funding directly from Norad, those large Norad development partners are very often in need of small local organizations in the developing countries to implement their projects on the ground, for which Fontes Foundation would well qualify.
programs at the youth centre made in this chapter which could also be implemented parallel to this one.

Another challenge could be that Fontes Foundation is not an organization that is solely dedicated to people with disabilities. NGO’s that are fully committed to disabled people are called “Disabled People’s Organizations” (DPO’s), which are focusing their activities mainly on this area. It could therefore become challenging for Fontes to directly compete with such DPOs for donor funding as the Disabled Youth Empowerment Program at the PYC would only be an addition to the youth project, disabled youth will not be the main focus of FF’s activities and will most likely never be in the future.

Mobilization of the disabled youth for this program addition is another issue that has to be taken into consideration. As discussed in chapter 4, the youth centre is already struggling with the mobilization for its normal core and short courses. Given the fact that a lot of families are ashamed of their disabled children and therefore lock them away at home as well as seeing them as useless, the chances to successfully mobilize deaf or mute students are even smaller. This means that the DYEP should target a limited number of youth (10 for example) to make sure that at least this number can be reached. Another possible challenge could be to find a suitable facilitator for those courses, as he/she has to be able to communicate in sign language, should have some experience in working with deaf/mute people as well as having the necessary professional expertise to teach the subjects (either English, ICT or a vocational profession).

To sum up the above said, the Disabled Youth Empowerment Program (DYEP) would be a viable opportunity for Fontes Foundation to increase its spectrum of activities and to attract new donor funds while increasing the employability of the most disadvantaged group of youth, the disabled. Even though some limitations and challenges have been presented, the program should be feasible and practicable when set up on a small scale. Offering for example one of the short courses to 10 deaf or mute students would be possible without a lot of donor money and would not require too many other resources. It should also be possible to mobilize 10 deaf or mute youth for each course. If this turns out to be problematic, the number of courses per year can also be adjusted. Vocational courses for disabled people would also be a possibility, but would come with higher costs than the former ones. But as the success of the Single Mothers Program, the focus group discussions and some of the interviews with former core course students have shown, vocational training seems to be very popular and highly desirable for the youth, therefore this possibility should also be taken into consideration.

5.3. Introduction of vocational training courses

Several former PYC core course students as well as the participants of the second focus group discussion immediately brought up vocational courses when being asked about how the Potentiam Youth Development Centre can improve its services to the unemployed youth. They were all very happy and impressed about the practical skills training that the
youth centre started to provide within the framework of the Single Mothers Program (SMP) that Fontes Foundation started up in July 2014. The SMP is carrying out weekly workshops for the single mothers studying at the centre where they learn practical skills that they can even carry out from home (Fontes Foundation, n.d., Youth Development). Some examples of practical skills lessons that have been carried out so far are cooking/baking, soap making or jewellery making. The advantage of courses like this are that the skills are easy to learn, the materials needed are not very expensive and it can already be started on a small scale. The actual and former core course students therefore suggested that such practical, vocational courses could be offered by the PYC as a separate course that takes place for a longer time than the ones for the Single Mothers Program, which are normally taking place four times during one month before a new type of course is taking place the following month. Especially catering has been mentioned several times by former core course students as a profession which is always in high demand and in which a lot of young people seem to be interested in.

The large disconnect of the skills that are provided by the Ugandan education system and the skills that employers are looking for which was discussed in chapter 3.1.2. has also been realized by the government which started several initiatives to improve the situation, like for example the Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) Act of 2008, the establishment of the Uganda Vocational Qualifications Framework (UVQF) or Skilling Uganda, a strategic plan to improve BVET for the years 2011-2020. Those measures are all aiming at making the education system less theoretical and providing the youth with practical skills needed for employment.

Given the importance of vocational skills according to the Ugandan Youth, the Ugandan government as well as the academic literature, it is worth considering such a program for Fontes Foundation as well.

5.3.1. Set-up of a vocational skills training course at the PYC – points to consider

Even though Fontes Foundation recognizes the crucial importance of vocational training in the fight of youth unemployment in Uganda (e.g. motivating their scholarship students to join vocational training institutes instead of universities), the organization consciously decided against offering vocational training courses at the centre, even though it was originally planned that way. The reason for this was the outcome of the assessment study already discussed earlier in this thesis which showed that for most employers, soft skills (e.g. communication skills, loyalty, honesty, etc.) are more important than the actual hard skills (vocational skills specifically needed to carry out this job) and the youth is lacking business, management and entrepreneurship skills of the youth (FF, 2011b, pp. 24-25). This is why it has been decided that the Youth Centre is focusing on applied business skills and personal development rather than vocational skills.

While the success of the youth centre proves this decision to be right, it does not mean that there should never be a vocational element at the PYC. To supplement the business and
personal development classes with a vocational training course could be a viable addition to the training the centre is providing and would emphasize the program’s holistic approach. But it is important that such a future vocational course only gets offered in combination with the actual core course, so that the youth does not only get the vocational skills, but also the business skills as well as the right attitude to work or getting self-employed.

One way of combining the current courses offered at the PYC with vocational training is the planned YouthBuild Uganda (YBU) project to be implemented by Fontes, which is currently in the fundraising phase in the US. In this program, the youth is absolving the core course at the Potentiam Youth Development Centre while parallel getting a vocational training in the field of construction. Those skills will then be used to build community assets in the neighbourhood of the youth centre before a certain number of students will get more specialised training in specific construction-related areas like painting, wall-tiling, scaffolding and door and window construction. The youth will also have the opportunity to make a pre-apprenticeship during the course as well as a full apprenticeship after the course with one of the various private sector construction partners that assured their support to the YouthBuild Uganda program (YouthBuild Uganda, 2014, p. 5). The youth will have construction-specific classes on Mondays while carrying out community asset building on Saturdays according to the concept note.

This kind of vocational training could also be carried out at the youth centre in the absence of the YBU project. As already mentioned, it would be important to make sure that the students participating in this vocational training are also participating in the core course to get the necessary business skills as well as the strongly needed attitude change. Therefore, the vocational training course should be offered to interested core course students that want to acquire some practical skills in a certain profession as well next to the training in the core course. As there are no classes so far on Mondays at the PYC, it would be a good opportunity to have the vocational classes on that day. Having vocational training every Monday over a time period of six months should provide the youth with sufficient skills in a certain profession to be employable afterwards. The newly gained contacts to various private and public companies active in the field of construction through the YBU concept note development as well as the large network of Fontes Foundation and its staff could also be used to provide pre-apprenticeships during the course as well as full apprenticeships after the course to the students, so that they can already gain on-the-job experience during or immediately after the vocational training.

The question remains which type of vocational training should be provided. Catering or jewellery making like the SMP provides requires little starting capital, skills that are easy to learn and the costs of the vocational training would be limited, but they also only offer a limited revenue when carried out on a small scale (which will be the case with the PYC students, at least in the beginning). Professions like scaffolding or carpentry are in high

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18 As the YBU project is still in the fundraising phase, it is not entirely sure at the moment if it gets enough funding to actually get implemented.
demand in the Ugandan economy due to the boom in the construction sector and are therefore paid comparably well, but they come with higher training costs for the youth centre as more expensive material is required for the education. Besides that, a more comprehensive assessment should be carried out before setting up the program in detail to find out in what areas the students are particularly interested. Because as William Ochieng stated correctly in his interview with the author, a young person should have a bigger say in defining his or her own career path in a field that he or she is interested in and where the person seems to have a talent. Therefore, Fontes Foundation has to set this up in close collaboration with the “grassroots level” to make sure that it provides vocational skills that are not only in demand with employers, but also attractive for the youth.

5.3.2. Benefits for Fontes Foundation

The main benefit for Fontes Foundation for introducing vocational training courses would be that its approach of youth development is truly becoming holistic. By acquiring vocational skills, business/management/entrepreneurial skills, attitude change through personal development as well as individual mentoring for two years, the students would be optimally prepared for their professional careers and can be released by the PYC with a good conscience. This holistic way of preparing the students for their professional lives would most likely make fundraising for future projects or programs at the Potentiam Youth Centre easier as the element of vocational training, which is very attractive among donors, is now also part of the youth centre program, without neglecting the core elements of the PYC education (business/management skills and personal development).

As in the case of the proposed introduction of courses for disabled youth, Fontes Foundation can increase its funding sources as well as its network by going into the field of vocational training. Donors and organizations that are active in this field are now becoming potential donors or collaborating partners for Fontes to which they did not really have access before as the organization was not active in that specific area.

5.3.3. Challenges and limitations

One possible challenge that Fontes could face regarding a vocational training program is to find adequate funding. Depending on the set-up of the training (e.g. type of profession that is taught, duration of the vocational training, numbers of hours taught per week, number of students to be educated, etc.) the costs can vary considerably. But according to the experiences made by the author while fundraising for other programs (e.g. the Single Mothers Program), potentially interested donors are often ready to discuss a concept note/project proposal and they are of course welcome to bring in their own perceptions and ideas of how such a program should look like. They normally do not just reject a proposal only because it is too expensive. Here, FF has to be flexible enough to make adjustments to this vocational training program according to the donors’ wishes, especially regarding the scope of the program. In the end, it is better to have the program implemented on a smaller scale (for example a “cheaper” course like catering which is taking place during the first three
months of each core course round) instead of aiming at a massive project like YouthBuild Uganda when the funds cannot be raised in the end.

Another challenge that will emerge sooner or later is also in this case the limited space and infrastructure at the PYC, as it has been discussed already in chapter 5.2.3. Even though the centre will have the capacity to either implement the vocational skill classes or the classes for disabled youth, it will become challenging when both of those (and even a third one) will be implemented. In that case, new facilities are needed which of course come with quite considerable additional costs. The infrastructure at the youth centre also limits the type of vocational education that can be provided on the spot, as a course that would need a lot of equipment has to be carried out outside the centre premises, which again would increase the costs and the practicability of the program.

An issue that could also arise is that focusing on a specific profession by providing this vocational training course could create tensions among the youth after graduating from the centre when looking for jobs or opening up their own businesses, as the participants in the vocational class are most likely trying to get a foothold into the sector they were trained in. This concern may sound silly for a Western European, but the issue can become a serious social problem in Uganda. Rumours (like for example “X took away the job that was meant to be for me” or “Y is stealing my customers for his/her own business”) can spread very quickly in Ugandan communities and can ruin the reputation of a person over night, without any kind of proof behind it. This is especially true in disadvantaged and poor communities where the education level is generally low, in which most of the PYC students are located.

To sum up this sub-chapter, adding vocational training courses would be a great opportunity for Fontes Foundation to make its youth program truly holistic (something the organization already claims by now). While the funding could become tricky depending on the type of vocational education, tailoring it to the wishes and financial capabilities of a potential donor should increase the chances of getting funding for it. Given the big success of the SMP’s livelihood workshops and the limited space available at the youth centre, it would be advisable to start with a simple and less costly vocational training course like catering or jewellery making.

5.4. Introduction of a recruitment service to connect graduates and employers

As it has been discussed in chapter 3.1.5., both the second focus group discussion as well as the literature research has shown that there is a lack of information between the job-seeking youth and the employers offering jobs. This seems to have two reasons, one is that a lot of youth is unaware of where and how to look for jobs and the other one is that employers are often not able to identify capable and well-trained young people because the youth is not able to signal their strengths and capabilities in an adequate manner. As Fontes Foundation has a large interest that their core course students find employment after graduation (as otherwise the program would be a waste of time and money without a serious effect in the everyday life of the youth), it would be an interesting and promising addition to
the FF youth program to set up some kind of platform for graduates where they get support to find a job.

Fontes already came up with a concept note for a Recruitment Hub at the beginning of 2014 (this has already been briefly presented in chapter 3.1.5.). As it has not successfully led to funding so far, this concept note should be critically re-discussed and changes in the setup of the program should be suggested to increase its feasibility and impact. As the author took over the management of Fontes Foundation after the creation of this Recruitment Hub concept note and was therefore not involved in its development, he should have the necessary critical distance to it to identify areas of improvement.

5.4.1. The “PYC Recruitment Hub 2.0” – A re-design

In this sub-chapter, the different elements of the Recruitment Hub concept note will be re-discussed one by one to critically evaluate if all those program components really make sense this way. There will also be new elements added if they are suitable.

The first element of the concept note is to hire a recruitment and business development advisor which will carry out mock interviews, will give inputs to students’ CVs and holds workshops on how to source for job opportunities (FF, 2013, p. 3). Even though all of this is a crucial basis for a successful job application, those elements are already included in the regular core course at the centre. In the Business English class for example, it is part of the curriculum to hold mock job interviews with the students as well as teaching them how to write a proper application. There are also multiple capacity-building events for every core course about personal branding and how to present yourself during a job interview with Larry Holm from People Performance Group Uganda, a successful HR recruitment company in Kampala. On top of that, students can always contact their mentors or the facilitators/management at the PYC in case that they need any support for job applications. It therefore makes little sense to use resources of the Recruitment Hub program for such activities.

A crucial element of the planned program is the database of employers with job postings suited to the youth. As there are various online job searching portals in Uganda like for example “The Ugandan Jobline” (www.theugandanjobline.com), “Kazijobs” (www.kazijobs.com) or “The Uganda Jobs” (www.theugandajobs.com), the Recruitment Hub could compile jobs from such platforms as well as newspaper job offers that are specifically suitable for the PYC youth. It is advisable to pre-select the job offers first to make sure that they students really have a chance to get the job and do not apply for example for senior management positions where they have no chance of getting the job from the beginning on. Besides job opportunities from the internet, the Recruitment Hub should be in regular interaction with local employers in the neighbourhood of the centre. A good start here would be the businesses that have been involved in the assessment study carried out before the establishment of the centre. Those companies should be contacted regularly (e.g. once a
month) to see if they have any open vacancies for which the PYC students would be qualified. This is probably even more promising than the internet job search as a lot of companies in the surrounding of the youth centre are in the informal sector of the economy and therefore have no internet presence at all. Another key lesson that the author learned (very often the hard way) during his time in Uganda is that communication in Uganda is in most cases only efficient when done in person or via phone and not through other media like the internet (email, Facebook, etc.). The relation to people in Uganda has to be kept as personal as possible, otherwise nothing is going to happen at all. All job offers suitable for the former students can then be collected and regularly updated in a database at the centre, which can be browsed by job-seeking graduates.

An element that should be added to the Recruitment Hub is that there should not only be a database with jobs available in which the youth is going to browse, but also a database with the profiles of the job-seeking youth which is accessible for interested employers. Especially in the case of the businesses questioned in the assessment study, access to motivated youth with the right attitude and work ethics as well as management and business skills could make the recruitment of new staff easy and – even more importantly – less frequent and the employee turnover could be reduced. The mentors of the students should also be added to this database as they all work for successful companies and organizations that will be in need of qualified workers on a regular basis, especially given the high employee turnover in Uganda. Only by offering services to both job-seekers as well as employers (which in the end benefits again the PYC youth), one can really call this program a “recruitment hub”.

The last element of the original Recruitment Hub concept note is the Business Advisory Service, which should support graduates after the set-up of their own business with advisory services related to their business. But given the fact that almost no student was able to implement his or her business plan directly after graduation because of the lack of start-up capital, it does not seem to make a lot of sense to establish such business advisory services at this point in time. Such a service would probably be better suited when combining it with the suggestion for improvement of sup-chapter 5.1., the set-up of a funding scheme for the business plans of PYC graduates, as this would increase the number of students starting up their own business after graduation.

5.4.2. Benefits for Fontes Foundation

Again, one of the benefits for FF is that this program extension would as well make the whole youth program more holistic. The organization would not only make the youth employable, but it would also contribute to the result that the youth actually gets employed after the training. This would be an additional advantage for Fontes when trying to promote itself or for fund-raising as the organization actively contributes towards the program having an actual impact on the lives of its beneficiaries.
Another benefit is that Fontes Foundation can enlarge its current network in Kampala by getting in touch with additional employers and companies through the intermediation of job-seeking students. It is also an opportunity to make use of the already existing as well as the newly added network through the YBU concept note of which both Fontes (and more precisely, the youth at the PYC) and the employers can mutually benefit.

5.4.3. Challenges and limitations

As with all the other new program suggestions made above, one hurdle to the future implementation of the Recruitment Hub program is to find adequate funding or – to look at it from another direction – to adjust the scope of the program to the financial capabilities of the potential donor. The original budget for the Recruitment Hub has been estimated to roughly 23,000 USD (FF, 2013, p. 4), which is again a considerable amount, especially compared to the overall PYC budget of roughly 55,000 USD. But by excluding the Business Advisory Service as well as the Recruitment and Business Advisor carrying out mock interviews and giving inputs to the student’s applications and CVs including workshops, the costs should be considerably reduced. As in the last sup-chapter, the extent of the program depends on the donor’s perception and financial capabilities.

The service rate that the youth has to pay according to the original Recruitment Hub concept note could also cause difficulties in practise. According to the concept note, the youth is supposed to pay back 50 % of their first earnings to the program for the benefit of the others (FF, 2013, p. 3). While this would of course be very good for the sustainability of the program, taking away half of their first salary would probably not have the most motivating effect on the youth. In addition, given the fact that 25 % of the PYC graduates are only earning below 40 USD and 37 % between 40 and 120 USD (FF, 2014c, p. 3), it would not be proportionate at all if they would have to hand in half of their humble salary and the benefit for the Recruitment Hub program would only be limited. An alternative would be to hand over 10 % of their first three monthly salaries to the Recruitment Hub. This would still generate some money of which the program can benefit while not putting the students in a difficult position.

Another challenge could be the regular communication with the local businesses carried out by the Recruitment Hub Coordinator. In the experience of the author, even with direct communication media like the phone or personal visits, it can occasionally become time-consuming and frustrating to follow up local businesses in Uganda. People are not reachable on their phone for days or they do not show up (or only very late) for meetings that have been set up in advance. Here, the Recruitment Hub Coordinator faces the challenge of finding a functioning system to make sure that the job database is regularly up to date.

To quickly sum up this chapter, establishing a recruitment hub at the PYC would be a valid opportunity for Fontes Foundation to increase the attractiveness as well as the impact of the youth program. By focusing on mechanisms to connect the youth with employers looking for employees (the job database for graduates and the job-seeker database for employers) instead of organizing workshops and counselling sessions for inputs that the youth can also
get at the PYC otherwise, it should be possible to keep the costs for donors low without reducing the benefits for the youth.

5.5. Improvement of the mobilization procedures at the PYC

So far, only suggestions for new projects and programs have been made in this chapter. But as the analysis of some of the weaknesses of the Potentiam Youth Centre has shown, there is also room for improvement in the actual procedures of the youth centre. One of them is the fact that since the kick-off of the PYC courses in fall 2012, the centre is struggling with the mobilization of students for the training. It turned out that Tukole Youth Group, which was the initiator of the project and which was put in charge of student mobilization from the beginning on, has turned out as very inefficient. The maximum amount of 30 students for the core course has not even closely been matched during the first two rounds, which is why Fontes Foundation tried to get on board additional youth groups from the neighbouring areas of Bukasa, where the youth centre is located. After four core courses, the numbers are still disappointing, especially given the fact that now four youth groups are mobilizing instead of only one. The youth groups are only bringing in a very small number of students (if any at all) while the major bulk is mobilized by PYC staff and facilitators, even though the youth groups get 10,000 UGX registration fee for every student that they are bringing in.

Especially in regard to the above mentioned suggestions for new program elements for the FF youth program, student mobilization becomes even more important as more students are needed to make sure that all the courses are more or less used to capacity. In this subchapter, two ideas will be presented of how the mobilization at the centre can be improved in the future.

5.5.1. PYC mobilization – new ideas and approaches

**Suggestion 1: involvement of local politicians** – One of the most active mobilizers besides the actual PYC staff and facilitators is the Local Council 1 (LC 1) chairman of Bukasa parish, the head of the political administration of the area the youth centre is located in. He brings in various youth for both the short and core course classes during every mobilization period. Even though the author does not want to deny that the LC1 Bukasa is also believing in the actual “cause” of the youth centre, the main motivation of this politician is rather to guarantee his re-election by showing the local community that he cares about its youth. Therefore, both the youth centre and the LC1 chairman have a mutual interest in the project, which led to a lot of support from the side of this politician.

Similar to the PYC’s strategy of reaching out to youth groups in the increased neighbourhood of Bukasa (e.g. Kansanga, Namuongo, Muyenga, etc.), the centre could also try to involve the local politicians of those areas to contribute towards the mobilization of new students. As this is a good way for those politician to profile themselves, their motivation should be high enough to bring in additional students for the courses at the Potentiam Youth
Centre. As a positive side effect, informing the political leadership of neighbouring communities would increase the general awareness level of the PYC among those communities, which would most likely lead to an increased participation in its programs by the youth.

**Suggestion 2: Involvement of current and former PYC students** – Another possibility would be to actively use current or former students from the centre as agents for mobilization. As it has been mentioned in the introduction of chapter 5.5., Tukole Youth Group is getting 10,000 UGX per student that is subscribing to the youth centre program. To increase the motivation for staff and facilitators to increase their mobilization efforts and as Tukole had become almost completely inactive during the last couple of months, the FF management in Uganda decided to pay this amount to the staff and facilitators as well when they bring in new students for the courses, which already has a positive influence on the student enrolment.

This 10,000 UGX per mobilized student could also be paid to actual or former youth centre students when they bring in other youth that actually enrol into the courses. As 10,000 UGX is quite a lot of money for such a former student, the motivation should be high for them to contribute to the mobilization. The students are also in a good position as they can give first-hand information about the benefits a young person can get from the PYC and they have easy access to other youth like their friends, neighbours or relatives. There has to be of course certain restrictions and clear rules in which cases and at what point in time the youth really gets the money to avoid abuse, which will be discussed in sub-chapter 5.5.2.

**5.5.2. Challenges and limitations**

One limitation of the involvement of students into the actual mobilization process is that money could set a wrong incentive for the youth. They could motivate all kind of youth to subscribe to the PYC courses and collecting the registration fee, only to see those new acquainted students dropping out one week later or not even showing up for classes at all. To prevent this, a system has to be developed to make sure that the students only get the 10,000 UGX when they bring in serious and committed students. One way of doing this is that the mobilizing youth only gets the registration fee once the student he or she brought in has absolved the short course completely (2 months) or the first three months of the core course to show that the student is sufficiently committed. The mobilizers should be registered in a database and will be paid once the criteria for payment are fulfilled.

In the case of involving more local politicians, the problem could arise that the Potentiam Youth Development Centre could become too “politicized”. As in a lot of countries, politicians in Uganda try as well to use every possible opportunity to advertise themselves or to use an event as a political platform, holding endless speeches when invited and trying to spread their political message. While this probably has to be accepted to a certain degree by Fontes Foundation as a necessary evil as the LC’s could be potentially valuable and strong partners for the PYC with a lot of influence on their communities, it has to be always kept an eye on their political activism when involved in centre activities. Another issue which could arise according to the experience of the author when dealing with Ugandan politicians
when more and more politicians are going to be involved is that the youth centre has to make sure that it maintains a good relationship with all of them and to show them that they are all equally important to the centre and the organization. Otherwise, it can easily happen that certain politicians feel less included and therefore get offended, which could then quickly turn this politician from an asset into a liability. Shortly speaking, even though involving more local politicians could be of a lot of benefit for the Potentiam Youth Development Centre, such a step has to be carefully evaluated and thought through as it can create more harm than good if it is not done properly.

5.6. Overview over the suggestions for new programs at the PYC

On the next page, Figure 7 is presenting an overview over the elements that the PYC is already offering as well as the new suggestions that have been made throughout chapter 5:
Figure 7: Overview over already existing and newly suggested elements for the PYC (own presentation)
6. Conclusion

6.1. Answering the research questions

As the first part of the conclusion, the research questions that have been stated at the beginning of this master thesis can be answered as followed:

**Questions 1 and 2**: Questions 1 and 2 have been answered in chapter 3 through the different reasons for youth unemployment. Three different types of reasons for youth unemployment have been identified by taking into consideration the (academic) literature, the information gathered by interviews and focus group discussions with current and past core course students as well as the personal experiences of the author while working with youth in Uganda: Systemic/economic reasons, social/cultural reasons as well as personal/individual reasons. An overview of the reasons identified is provided in table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of reason</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Systemic/economic</td>
<td>Rural-urban migration</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mismatch of Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of entrepreneurship/management skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Limited access to financial capital</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inadequate job matching</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Low level of aggregate demand for labour in the economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social/cultural</td>
<td>Demographic Development/population growth</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of parental guidance/career guidance at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corruption/nepotism/tribalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/individual</td>
<td>Negative attitude of youth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2: Overview of the identified reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda (own presentation)*

**Question 3**: Chapter 4.2. gave an overview over the Fontes Foundation youth program and the Potentiam Youth Development Centre in specific. It turned out that Fontes is focusing on business, management and entrepreneurial skills as well as the attitudes of young people through personal development classes instead of for example vocational training or basic education. In Chapter 4.4., youth programs with a specifically different focus have been discussed, namely with focus on disability (Masaka Vocational and Rehabilitation Centre), vocational skills (Mengo Youth Development Link Vocational Training Centre), financing youth’s business start-ups (BRAC’s Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents
(ELA) program) and environmental issues (Kasiisi Project’s Conservation Education Program).

**Question 4:** On the basis of what has been discussed in chapter 3 and 4, five suggestions for improvements have been proposed for the FF youth program, more specifically the Potentiam Youth Development Centre. The results were four suggestions for new programs/projects at the PYC with the possible main benefit of diversifying the different areas Fontes Foundation is active in to enlarge its network, increasing the fundraising for the organization as well as making the FF youth program even more holistic as it already is. The four suggestions are the following:

- **Fundraising scheme for PYC students’ business start-ups:** setting up a micro loan project financed by donors or connecting graduated students to interested micro-finance institutions to enable the students to implement their business plans and use all the skills acquired after their graduation.

- **Courses for deaf and mute youth:** offering short courses and/or vocational skills courses for especially disadvantaged youth like mute and deaf people to involve them into the PYC as well and to target donors especially interested in projects for disabled people.

- **Vocational training courses:** offering vocational training courses at the PYC in addition to the business/management/entrepreneurial skills, the personal development classes and the mentorship program already provided.

- **Recruitment hub for both students and employers:** setting up a recruitment service to which both the job-seeking youth as well as the employers looking for employable youth have access to make sure that PYC students are not only employable but actually find employment.

As a fifth suggestion for improvement, the weak student mobilization has been examined and new strategies have been developed. One idea would be to involve local politicians more actively into the mobilization as they have an interest in keeping their communities happy. Another option would be to include current and former core course students into the mobilization procedure by setting financial incentives for them.

**Question 5:** This research question has mainly been answered through the personal experiences made by the author of this thesis as the Regional Coordinator of Fontes Foundation in Uganda. The possible challenges and limitations for each suggestion have been discussed to critically evaluate them, especially in regard of the specific feasibility in the case of the youth centre. Where suitable, possible measures to mitigate those challenges/limitations have been proposed to design the suggestions for improvement in a way that they are practicable for the organization. The main restriction that all the suggestions have in common is the necessity of additional funds for Fontes Foundation to implement those new
suggestsions as four out of the five of them are new programs or extensions of existing programs. While this could turn out to be a challenge, it is also an opportunity for Fontes to acquire new funds and to reduce the pressure on the generally very tight budget.

6.2. Lessons learned

The analysis of the reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda has shown that Fontes Foundation is on the right track with its approach. By providing business skills, personal development and individual mentorship to the youth, the organization is already tackling the problem of the mismatch of skills, the lack of entrepreneur/management skills, the lack of career guidance at school as well as the negative attitude of a lot of youth. By introducing additional programs at the PYC like the business start-up funding scheme or a recruitment hub, Fontes Foundation could also address the issue of the lack of access to capital or the inadequate job matching between youth and employers, and therefore covering a wide range of these reasons for youth unemployment.

An important lesson learned in this thesis is that Fontes Foundation and its youth program is mainly contributing towards the informal sector of the economy. Given the fact that more than 80% of all businesses in Uganda belong to the informal sector (e.g. are not registered, are not paying taxes, are not following labour laws, etc.) (Muwonge, Obwona & Nambwaayo, 2007, p. 7), the PYC youth is most likely either finding employment in an already existing informal business or is starting up their own business in the informal sector. Even though having a large informal sector is often negatively connoted and seen as a sign of underemployment in a lot of literature, it is undeniably the driving force behind the economic development in a lot of SSA countries like Uganda, and must be regarded and treated as part of the solution to a lot of current development efforts (Hope, 2008, p. 39). This especially counts when fighting unemployment in an economy like Uganda with a still tiny formal and a huge informal sector.

It is also crucial to be aware of the fact that the impact of Fontes on the fight against the overall youth unemployment level in Uganda has its limits. Certain reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda are rooted on the macro level of Uganda’s economy/society, like the demographic development/population growth or the low level of aggregate demand for labour in the economy, which are very difficult to tackle for a single small organization like Fontes Foundation. And even though Fontes Foundation could hypothetically enter certain other fields (like addressing rural/urban migration by starting youth projects on the country side or by addressing the population growth through family planning and contraception programs), it would not be recommendable as the organization has no prior experience in those fields and has to start from scratch which would cost a lot of time and resources.

Therefore, Fontes Foundation should at the moment focus on smaller project extensions and new sub-programs at the PYC to get financially a bit more comfortable and stable. As especially the youth centre budget is extremely tight and at the absolute minimum at the moment, some additional funds for specific new youth centre programs would generate
additional means for the organization’s overhead costs and would release some pressure from the PYC budget. This can be achieved by implementing one or several of the new program suggestions mentioned in this thesis, like a recruitment hub for students and employers, courses for deaf/mute youth, vocational training courses or a funding scheme for the financing of students’ business start-ups. Besides the increased funding through those new programs, Fontes Foundation could increase its network by connecting to organizations working with disabled, vocational training and micro-financing and could generally make its approach more holistic overall by providing a complete educational “package” to the youth which makes them truly fit for the labour market.

It is crucial though to critically evaluate those new possibilities to make sure that they are feasible and practicable under the specific circumstances that Fontes Foundation and its youth program are operating in, to make sure that this thesis is not just another “paper tiger” which is in the end not implementable on the ground. The access of the organization to funds is a crucial determinant for the successful implementation of one or several of those new program suggestions. But even more importantly, one has to be aware of the local circumstances and the habits and beliefs of the people involved. This is confirmed by Ambe J. Njoh, who claims that the only sound foundation for socio-economic development in Africa is the inclusion of African cultural and traditional practices into development assistance projects (Njoh, 2006, p. 186), a viewpoint that is also shared by Fontes Foundation and its staff. Being aware of the constructive, but also the potentially destructive effect of involving local politicians in the mobilization process is as important for new projects and programs as the significance of gossip and rumours in the local communities or the importance of direct and personal communication with the employers in the area.

Regular and transparent communication as well as keeping a personal relationship with all the stakeholders involved (e.g. local politicians, the police, youth groups, church leaders, the youth and their parents, etc.) is crucial for the success of the Potentiam Youth Development Centre in general and the new program and project suggestions presented in this thesis in specific. Especially foreign Fontes Foundation staff like the author has to be made aware of those local habits and have to be appropriately trained and counselled by local and/or more experienced foreign staff to avoid (possibly irreparable) damages in the relationship with the local stakeholders. But in line with the Fontes Foundation mission and vision, learning it the hard way and not always going the easiest route is sometimes having the longest-lasting impact and provides people with the most valuable lessons learned.
List of Literature


List of Internet Sources


Declaration of Authorship

I hereby declare

- That I have written this thesis without any help from others and without the use of documents and aids other than those stated above,

- That I have mentioned all sources and that I have cited them correctly according to established academic citation rules.

Michael Pletscher
Appendix

A. Interviews with former core course students

A1. Framework/questionnaire

The questions have been selected in a way that the former PYC students are able to understand and answer them. It has to be kept in mind that some of the students are still not completely fluent in English after graduating from the course. In addition, even though most students made huge progress in public speaking and gained a lot of self-confidence due to the personal development lessons at the centre, some of them were not very comfortable and seemed nervous during the interview, mainly due to the fact that they were interviewed by the Regional Coordinator of Fontes Foundation Uganda. It helped though that all of them knew the author on a personal level from his time as the volunteer for Fontes Foundation, where he worked closely together with them at the Potentiam Youth Centre.

The questionnaire was structured in a way that the students can freely speak their mind on the topic of youth unemployment and the services offered at the Potentiam Youth Development Centre. After a “warm-up” question about the personal background of the student (which also offered some interesting insights into the very often difficult family situation of a lot of students as well as the educational level of the respective student as well as his/her family), the students were asked to explain why they joined the youth centre in the first place to establish which skills they were lacking. Afterwards, the students were asked to reflect about the reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda, how those reasons can be fought and which actors should be involved into fighting it. The idea behind this was to get the opinion of the affected target group – the disadvantaged and unemployed youth in Kampala – and to give them a voice as well instead of merely relying on academic research and personal impressions of the author. In the second part of the questionnaire, the questions were more about the youth centre, how it helped the students to improve their situation, what could be done to improve the services offered and what the limitations of those suggestions would be. In the end, the students were asked about their future plans and how they want to reach those goals in their lives. This last part should serve as a relaxed way of completing the interview, finding out if the students have a plan in life and if they are looking for self-employment or not.

Depending on the development of the individual interview as well as the capability of the young person (e.g. level of English, level of comfortableness during the interview, quality of responses, etc.), certain questions have been left out by the author to avoid overwhelming the interviewee.
Questionnaire for former Core Course students of the Potentiam Youth Development Centre – Youth unemployment in Uganda

Name:
Age:
Core Course round:
Actual occupation:

1. Can you tell me about your background before joining the PYC (education, family (parents, siblings), etc.)?

2. In your opinion, which kind of skills did you lack to become successful in your professional life before you join the PYC?

3. What are the main reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda according to you?

4. How can those causes for youth unemployment be mitigated/fought?

5. Which actors should be involved to fight youth unemployment in Uganda?

6. In what way was the PYC able to improve your situation?

7. What should be added to the Potentiam Youth Development Centre to improve the training that youth can receive there?

8. What are limitations for the suggestions of improvement mentioned above?

9. Where do you see yourself in ten years?

10. How are you going to reach there?
A2. Transcriptions of interviews with former core course students

*Interview Brenda Namuli*

**Name:** Brenda Namuli  
**Age:** 21  
**Core Course round:** 2

Actual occupation: unemployed, but about to get a job, and she is doing a diploma course in accounting and finance

1. **Can you tell me about your background before joining the PYC (education, family (parents, siblings), etc.)?**

I was living with my mother until P7, but then she lacked the funds to continue paying for my education. But then I had my granny, who had some money with which she funded her education here in Kansanga where I completed my secondary school and I graduated from S6. Then Jesca from core course round 1 recommended to me to go and get some skills at the PYC. After the ICT short course, I joined the core course during my secondary school break because I had nothing better to do. In the beginning, I was just spending my days there, but then with time I found that it is of great value especially as I had no money to join university. After that, she got a half-bursary from a college so that I can do a diploma in accounting and finance which I am still doing now. But I dream about continuing to university to do a course in ICT or accounting.

2. **In your opinion, which kind of skills did you lack to become successful in your professional life before you join the PYC?**

I lacked the ability of expressing myself, I couldn’t stand in front of people to talk about myself. I also didn’t have the knowledge of IT that I needed, but now I can forward my knowledge from the centre to friends of mine and other people. I didn’t really know what to expect in the core course before I joined the centre, but I just decided to try it instead of sitting at home doing nothing.

3. **What are the main reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda according to you?**

Education: If you don’t have papers, it’s very difficult to get a job. The whole system of the education is changing as it becomes more and more difficult to succeed. This leads to the situation that a lot of youth end up with very little salary if any, and only the ones with papers get well-paid.

Another reason is parental negligence. Some parents don’t want to pay for their kids’ education. Especially men cannot handle to pay the school fees for all the children that they are producing. This goes back to the culture in Uganda where men need as many women and kids as possible.

Some of the youth don’t want to work, there is a lot of redundancy. Gambling also brought a lot of problems, especially sports betting instead of doing something productive because they are looking for quick money. This also goes back to parental negligence as the parents don’t take their time to educate their kids or to take properly care of them.

4. **How can those causes for youth unemployment be mitigated/fought?**

Government has to change the whole system of studying. They should teach productive things that are going to help the youth. They should concentrate more on practical subjects and not physics, history, etc. I studied Napoleon but he is not going to help me in my life. Government should also
reduce on the tuition fees which is too high right now. The requirement for jobs are also too high, employers shouldn’t just look at the papers. The government should also ban things like gambling to change the attitude of the youth.

The youth themselves should also change by becoming job-creators and not job-seekers. Like this, they can employ themselves instead of searching for jobs.

5. In what way was the PYC able to improve your situation?

The mentorship program was very beneficial as well as the computer skills. A lot of things have added value to my CV and I had a good relationship to my mentor, Madame Rowena. She helped me a lot with my business plan, we met every Monday and she gave me advice and told me what I can do better, which I didn’t expect. I was also able to discuss matters of my personal life, the challenges I use to face, etc.

The ICT knowledge that I got from here also helped me to get jobs, especially for my secretarial bureau job which would not have been possible with my computer skills.

6. What should be added to the Potentiam Youth Development Centre to improve the training that youth can receive there?

You should include additional courses, especially practical ones. You should also add more computer skill courses like software development which I would have liked to do. Technology is growing day by day and more computer skills are essential for the professional world. The students should already start up their businesses during the core course and then they continue with it afterwards. The PYC should encourage the students to save up money during their time at the centre which they could then use for their businesses. They could also ask their parents for some money to invest in their businesses. By the time they finish their business plan, they should then be able to expand their businesses.

7. What are limitations for the suggestions of improvement mentioned above?

Funding is definitely a challenge as well as getting more students for the next round of courses. In the end, everything is about the funding, you need to invest. Fontes or the students have to find the funds to open up their businesses while they are at the centre.

8. What is your occupation since you left the youth centre?

I first had to work to save some money. Afterwards, I started my business together with my sister by implementing my business plan from the youth centre, which was a juice shop. But then my sister found another job and I was forced to temporarily stop my juice business because I cannot handle everything myself. Most of the juice was sold at my sister’s former workplace, which was no possibility anymore after she quit her job as I have no time to distribute the juice there alone. But the business equipment is still at home and can be started again any time, my business is not dead yet.

9. Where do you see yourself in ten years?

First of all, my dream is to go back and study business or IT because I need papers for my job. In Uganda, you can’t only concentrate only on one thing, therefore I want a good job plus my own business.

I also want to travel abroad, especially America.
**Interview Denis Ssebugwawo**

**Name:** Denis Ssebugwawo  

**Age:** 26  

**Core Course round:** -  

**Actual occupation:** Administrative Assistant PYC

1. **Can you tell me about your background before joining the PYC (education, family (parents, siblings), etc.)?**

   I’m so glad to be given this opportunity to speak about this issue to you Michael as the Regional Coordinator of Fontes Foundation Uganda. I got born in St. Francis Hospital in Nsambya, Kampala. I have managed to grow up within Kampala, in Muyenga, with my family members which are my mum, my dad, plus some other relatives. I managed to accomplish to complete my nursery, my primary level, and both O and A-level of secondary school, so I graduated from secondary school. I started to study at university, psychiatry, but due to financial circumstances, I dropped out of university after one year. After that, Fontes Foundation started to set up the youth centre. During that process, they mobilized a number of youth from the community to volunteer for setting up the centre. I was amongst the group of youth that appeared there. I did this with all my heart from January 2012 up to around March 2012. The other youth then left the project as it was not income-generating, but I stayed. I then designed the whole compound for the centre on my own together with William Barigye, the Youth Program Coordinator. He then offered me to look after the compound myself, e.g. doing the cleaning and doing the sanitation. While working, I got more and more responsibilities like being the receptionist and giving information about the centre. I worked like this for six months and in December 2012, due to the good work I’ve done, I’ve been given a promotion to Administrative Assistant and now I’ve worked in this position for two years up to now. During this time, I managed to acquire skills in ICT, repair, maintenance and networking. A lot of those skills I learned online first in theory and then in practise through learning-by-doing.

2. **In your opinion, which kind of skills does the youth lack to become successful in their professional life before you join the PYC?**

   Since I’m always in the field and I’m leading of the mobilization committee, I was able to talk to a lot of youth. The skills that they normally lack are for example self-confidence, they don’t believe in themselves. If you ask them to join the courses at the centre, they don’t think that they are able to succeed in those courses. This is why the personal development is very important as it boosts youth’s self-confidence. Another skill that they lack are communication skills. They also don’t know how to communicate, with whom and when they are supposed to say which thing. And even if they are communicating, the communication is not effective as they don’t understand you.

   Another skill that they are lacking is managing and accounting for their finances. In a lot of slums, youth is complaining about the lack of money and that they are poor, but most of them are earning some little money, they just don’t know how to manage it. As I started working for Fontes, I started from zero without any money. But as I learned to organize my finances, it helped to push me to the next level.
Another skill that the youth lacks are business skills. As most youth here have poor and humble background, they started their own businesses but they didn’t know how to run it. For example, they sold things on credit, meaning that the customers take it now and pays later, but very often, they never saw this money at all and the business collapses.

3. What are the main reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda according to you?

First of all, education. Most youth in Uganda goes through a poor education system. Up to university level, the education provided by the Ugandan government is on a very poor level and cannot compete with international schools.

Another reason is the population increase. Here in Uganda, a lot of people don’t practise any family planning. People have up to six children but the parents cannot provide for them. The demographic development creates a lot of unemployment. If all those children are not going to school, they lack the skills and knowledge for jobs. The Ugandan government and society have to do better family planning and the number of kids a family has, especially for people that don’t earn that much, should be reduced. Some people do that because they have an “ancient” mind. The world is changing at a very fast rate, but those people don’t want to change, it is a cultural thing.

Peer groups pressure: They have done more harm than good. If for example I have a friend who doesn’t believe in working, he tells me “Why do you go to work, why do you go to school?”, so I would end up with him doing funny stuff like playing cards all day instead of working. Some Africans still have the belief, for example here in Muyenga, that they will land on a loaded white and that they get money from them to start a new life. They have the mentality of being given instead of working for themselves. For example, a lot of young people think that I must be rich because I’m always around Muzungus (white people). This is the mentality of a lot of youth in Uganda and Africa at large, they always have this hand that begs! Because of that, they forget to work, they always want to receive free things.

Government level: Here embezzlement of funds and corruption is happening all the time, which is very obvious in Uganda. If we receive funds from abroad to help the youth, the money that arrives gets diverted by the government people in charge of it and they do their own things with it. At the end, this affects the people on the ground which are in need of them. The government also always takes very long to act in general, so some people just gave up when it comes to deal with the government, they don’t even try.

4. How can those causes for youth unemployment be mitigated/fought?

The government should put more pressure on the youth and should ban certain habits like gambling in Uganda. This would take those youth away from the streets so that they can focus on more productive activities. I think that all of this youth would find employment if they really want to. There are a lot of job opportunities in the farming and fishing sectors where you need no qualification, you just have to be willing to do it.

The government should also create more industries. As most investors come from abroad, for example in the oil sector, only foreign experts get hired and Ugandans cannot profit because they are under-qualified. The government should also allow this youth to do that by first train them and then also hire them, as we already have people in Uganda who did courses in petroleum engineering, but they got denied a chance.
On society/family level, parental guidance is important. Ugandan people have to teach their kids how to work and how to do business, like for example the Indians. This has to start at home from birth onward. You have to put the right attitude into your children.

5. Which actors should be involved to fight youth unemployment in Uganda?

Family, local leaders, government (should have upper hand) and NGO’s.

6. What are the reasons for the youth to join the youth centre in the first place?

Most people lack basic English skills and communication skills in general, also in their local language. These people come to PYC to get English communication skills. Other people come for computer skills. In Africa, the access to computer is very limited for most families, only the rich ones can afford it. So they come to close this gap in education.

Other youth come for the various capacity-buildings like with Ethan Mussolini. Those motivational speakers have a big impact on the youth at the centre as they are all experts in their field. The single mothers are also coming to acquire some skills (e.g. jewellery, soap or cooking) with which they start their own small businesses afterwards.

Others are getting skills in business, as they don’t know how to operate a business.

7. What should be added to the Potentiam Youth Development Centre to improve the training that youth can receive there?

I have received a number of people that are requesting training in certain programs like for example Adobe Photoshop, as they like to do businesses related to pictures/photos. Microsoft Access would also be a good addition to the centre. Other people would love to learn other international languages like Chinese, French or Swahili.

It would also be good to set up other vocational trainings like brick laying or carpentry which would be very beneficial for the youth. We could set up a workshop at the centre to train them how to make those things.

We would also need some space to make some indoor games to attract more people to come to the centre. While those people will play those indoor games, they will develop interest in the PYC courses and will eventually join the centre. Examples would be pool or table tennis as a source of mobilization.

8. Where do you see yourself in ten years?

In ten years’ time, I see myself as one of the most successful guys in the IT field, especially in the field of computer repair and maintenance. I also want to be one of the greatest producers in Uganda in the agricultural sector, as I have started my own pig farm with three pigs a bit more than a year ago. As well, I’m seeing myself as a successful father with a family of 2-3 children with a wife. One of my plans is also to set up orphanages. In ten years to come, I want to establish such an orphanage to give a hand to the needy. This is my plan ever since my secondary level as those young people have no possibility to be successful in life.

9. How are you going to reach there?

Now I started my pig farm last year, and I plan to expand it in 2015, so that I can get some money out of it to start up my other plans.
**Interview Immaculate Nabulime**

**Name:** Immaculate Nabulime  
**Age:** 23  
**Core Course round:** 2  
**Actual occupation:** Secretary

1. **Can you tell me about your background before joining the PYC (education, family (parents, siblings), etc.)?**

   I’m from a family of five, and I’m the last born. So far my life was not so difficult with my family, I went to school and did all my courses, up to S6, then I made a diploma in hair dressing and then I came to the PYC. First I did the ICT short course and then I joined the core course. My siblings are all working because I am the last born. Some of them are employed and some of them have their own businesses.

2. **In your opinion, which kind of skills did you lack to become successful in your professional life before you join the PYC?**

   I lacked using a computer. I only knew how to switch it on, but I don’t know word, excel, etc. I also learned personal skills like self-confidence, I learned how to speak in front of the class or a panel and how to present. We had personal development, how to handle yourself, how to solve problems, etc.

3. **What are the main reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda according to you?**

   You have to know somehow at a company/government office, otherwise you’re not going to be employed. For some youth, they lack transport to get jobs, it’s too expensive. But I think that the jobs are there, but people don’t call you back after you applied.

   There is also lack of skills of the youth. People graduating from the PYC at least have the skills to apply for a job. The government has to do something there.

4. **How can those causes for youth unemployment be mitigated/fought?**

   Taking all the youth to institutes and to make sure that they get the skills they mostly need in companies like computer skills and personal development and removing corruption in the government, so that you don’t have to know people at companies/government offices. The youth should also be encouraged to get skills that are important. Also NGO’s and other organizations should sensitize the youth to do something.

5. **Which actors should be involved to fight youth unemployment in Uganda?**

   The youth needs leaders in Uganda who would know the different training institutions and job opportunities, both from society and the government. People of the training institutions should help the students to get some jobs, to take their CV’s somewhere.
6. In what way was the PYC able to improve your situation?

I had a diploma in hair dressing before, but I didn’t like it that much, so I wanted to know how to use a computer. So I learned at the PYC how to type, how to use a computer, how to use word, excel, PowerPoint, etc. Those skills I can use now in my job as a secretary.

7. What should be added to the Potentiam Youth Development Centre to improve the training that youth can receive there?

I would think if there would be more courses like catering, this would benefit the PYC students very well. It would be good to implement this in a core course time frame as you need more than a couple of weeks to learn different food to prepare.

8. What are limitations for the suggestions of improvement mentioned above?

Availability of space could be a problem as you need infrastructure to cook (sauce pans, knives, etc.). Maybe the youth centre is too small for that.

9. Where do you see yourself in ten years?

I would like to have an internet café as well as a stationary shop where people can print and scan and copy because I like those things. I don’t want to grow old very fast, you’re always on a computer and your brain stays very sharp.

10. How are you going to reach there?

If God wishes, I can get some capital and then I can start slow and grow bigger and bigger. Even though I don’t earn a lot of money now, but it is better than sitting at home and doing nothing.
Interview Janet Nabulya

Name: Janet Nabulya
Age: 23
Core Course round: 2
Actual occupation: searching for a job

1. Can you tell me about your background before joining the PYC (education, family (parents, siblings), etc.)?

I grew up with my young mother but not with my real mother, and my father died, so I only had my mother. I studied up to S4 and finished it. We are 7 children in my family, two are boys and 5 are girls and I am the second last born. Some of them are working, some of them are looking for jobs like myself, because it's not easy to get a job. I first started at the PYC with the ICT short course before I joined the core course.

2. In your opinion, which kind of skills did you lack to become successful in your professional life before you join the PYC?

I was lacking knowledge on how to start up my own business and I wanted to learn more about computers and I wanted to improve on myself, to work on my self-esteem.

3. What are the main reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda according to you?

There are too many peer groups. Some of them who don’t want to do anything and don’t want to find a job, some youth are very lazy. Some youth take drugs like alcohol or green roots and get spoiled. I think that the problem is mainly on the side of the youth and their attitude.

Other youth are so loved by their parents that they don’t tell them anything, they don’t encourage them to search a job after their studies, which is a sign for lack of parental guidance.

Some youth members who studied at universities are very picky with jobs, they want special jobs like office jobs and not doing physical work.

4. How can those causes for youth unemployment be mitigated/fought?

You have to give the youth training and you have to encourage them to work and to form their own businesses to become successful. Especially the LC’s, the local government, have to become active and mobilize the youth in the neighbourhood to keep them busy. Some youth members also have to be encouraged to go back to study to get what they want in life.

5. Which actors should be involved to fight youth unemployment in Uganda?

It all starts at the president and the government at large. They should offer more interesting training courses for the youth to study and improve their situation. And then again the LC’s in the community who should also try to offer interesting jobs to the youth members.
6. In what way was the PYC able to improve your situation?

I learned how to use computers and I also learned how to plan and how to do my own business. I am also capable of speaking in front of people, which I feared in the past but now it is ok as I gained more self-esteem.

7. What should be added to the Potentiam Youth Development Centre to improve the training that youth can receive there?

If you would add catering courses, this would work.

8. What is your occupation since you left the youth centre?

I was working in a retail shop but this didn't work out anymore. I'm not looking for a specific job, anything.

9. Where do you see yourself in ten years?

I want to become a mother with two kids and a husband, with a home and being working with a job. She wants her own shop near her home as well as a small farm in the back yard.

10. How are you going to reach there?

By working real hard for my future.
Interview Mohammed Kinene

Name: Mohammed Kinene
Age: 25
Core Course round: 2
Actual occupation: unemployed

1. Can you tell me about your background before joining the PYC (education, family (parents, siblings), etc.)?

I grew up with my grandmother who passed away by now. She liked me a lot and she’s the one that helped me in all my necessities. My father was there, but he didn’t help me, he didn’t pay for my fees and so on, so it was my grandma who was responsible for me. My mum wasn’t very good financially as well, but she tried at least. My grandma paid for school fees for the first seven years up to P7, then she had to give up for secondary. I was too young to earn a living at that time. Then one of my brothers called me to Gulu to work there in his shop for 3-4 years, but he didn’t really pay me, he just gave me commission, food and accommodation. I saved some money and opened up a business myself. Then I went to town in Kampala and bought everything I need to sell in Gulu. But my brother and his wife didn’t like that, they accused me of stealing their money and they didn’t like me anymore, until my business collapsed. I don’t know why my business collapsed. Then I went back to Kampala, where I worked in a brick factory for two years, even though the work was not consistent. After that, I joined the youth centre.

I have five siblings, some of them are younger, some older. My older siblings all have jobs and the younger ones are still at school.

2. In your opinion, which kind of skills did you lack to become successful in your professional life before you join the PYC?

I was missing to be intellectual and I was missing a lot of education. I wanted to improve my general education.

3. What are the main reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda according to you?

The government of Uganda are not doing enough for the youth regarding the implementation of their youth program, to organize the youth, to teach them how to make money. Normally individuals or organizations like Fontes do educate the youth, but not the government. Only when those actors do a good job, the government jumps in but then it is already late, they’re just copying.

Most youth are also just lazy. They are educated, so every job that is below 300,000 UGX is too little for them, so they refuse to do the job. Also the people in the big offices don’t resign even though they are already 70 years old to free some jobs for the youth.

You also have to bring the youth and successful people from the country to teach the youth about how to earn money.

4. How can those causes for youth unemployment be mitigated/fought?

The government should listen to the people to understand what their people say and think, not just do what they want which is the policy here, they don’t bother about people.
NGO’s like Fontes Foundation should also become more active as well and should fight youth unemployment more effectively.

We also have to talk to the parents to build the tomorrow’s people of Uganda. Parents shouldn’t accept their children to be lousy, because tomorrow, those kids are going to be independent and have to take their own decisions.

5. **Which actors should be involved to fight youth unemployment in Uganda?**

Government, NGOs, parents.

6. **In what way was the PYC able to improve your situation?**

First of all, I am now able to go in any kind of office and face anyone. Before, I didn’t have the self-confidence to talk to somebody in a big office. I also acquired computer skills and I know how to do a business plan, I even help actual youth centre students with their business plans. I also became much more creative.

7. **What should be added to the Potentiam Youth Development Centre to improve the training that youth can receive there?**

The Youth Centre should offer more practical skills courses like cake baking or making necklaces as it is very important for the youth and it makes starting up a business much easier.

It would be great if people from the Fontes management could connect youth from the centre to companies abroad. Because the money that they earned there they can bring back to Uganda to help more people or Fontes could also connect people to local companies and organizations.

8. **What is your occupation since you left the youth centre?**

Right now, one of my young fathers is manufacturing/baking Mandazis and I help him with that. The Mandazis we sell in the neighbourhood. Before that, I had no job even though I applied at a lot of places. I also went to Sheraton and Joint Medical Store to apply for jobs, but they never called me back.

9. **Where do you see yourself in ten years?**

In ten years, I want to be a father, not only being a father, but a good father, and an employed man, hopefully self-employed. I would like to start a book-making shop in the future. So in ten years, I will be a big, responsible and inspired man.
**Interview Stella Mirembe**

_Name:_ Stella Mirembe  
_Age:_ 27  
_Core Course round:_ 1  
_Actual occupation:_ child minder Potentiam Youth Centre

1. **Can you tell me about your background before joining the PYC (education, family (parents, siblings), etc.)?**

I went to primary school and then I went for my high school (S1-S4). In senior 4 she conceived and dropped out of school, had to give birth and everything, didn’t sit for S4 exams. At PYC, I started with the short course. After the short course, I went for the short course. Today, I still live with my mother here in Bukasa and even back then as I was in the core course. Her parents wanted to go back to school but I had to take care of my baby and stayed home. Only as she started her nursery school, I started the short course.

I have four brothers and three sisters. They are already working, my oldest brother works in Kampala and my two elder brother and sister are living in the UK. One other sister is married and stays in Kenya where she also works. All the others are also working but in Uganda. They left a long time ago and I don’t know why. One sister studied in the UK and just stayed there, marrying and working as an accountant. My other brother also decided to go to the UK and he has a restaurant there serving Ugandan food, maybe it is better that way.

2. **In your opinion, which kind of skills did you lack to become successful in your professional life before you join the PYC?**

I did some course in hair dressing and clearing/forwarding before I joined the youth centre. But after that, I needed to get a chance to learn those ICT courses because I realized during those courses that I need some computer skills, which is why I joined. Up to S4, we don’t have any ICT education, so I was lacking everything. Everybody expects you to have ICT skills but the school system doesn’t provide it.

3. **What are the main reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda according to you?**

It’s all about connections. It doesn’t matter how much you are educated or how many skills you have, if you don’t have any connections, if you don’t know some people somewhere, you will not be employed. If you know somebody, the person can easily connect you. There is a lot of corruption and you even can pay people to give you a job. But your papers alone don’t help you. It’s all about knowing the right people.

The government also hasn’t worked enough for the youth. It hasn’t put enough resources into fighting youth unemployment. They just speak out but they don’t act. The government has to plan for the youth to reduce the unemployment.

4. **How can those causes for youth unemployment be mitigated/fought?**

Youth should just get a chance to get some experience in entrepreneurship. Instead of waiting for a job, youth should start their own businesses on a small scale and then grow bigger. One can waste
years and years to find a job without success, so this person would better start his or her own business instead of chasing after jobs.

5. Which actors should be involved to fight youth unemployment in Uganda?

The government has to think twice, it has to plan for the youth.

The youth should also not wait for other people to do something for them, they should start to think themselves and start up small businesses, and they should help themselves.

6. In what way was the PYC able to improve your situation?

I got skills in ICT. In the core course, I had the applied business skills course which helped me a lot. Besides being a child minder, I have my own business at the side. Our final exam was a business plan and I made one for a boutique. I haven’t done a lot there but the boutique is existing. I got the courage to start up this small business for myself and with time it will grow.

7. What should be added to the Potentiam Youth Development Centre to improve the training that youth can receive there?

When I was doing my core course, I thought of the single mothers program before it came. It is very important because people use it a lot by now, it’s a great deal but Fontes should bring more cooking stuff. Those skills courses should be taught for a longer period of time.

There should also be lessons about other things like catering, but on a permanent basis during the whole core course. Like this, more people would register for those courses. If it would be like a separate course for catering or hair dressing as people are very interested in those things. Of course you cannot learn those skills in one month so you would need a course which takes place one or two times a week over a longer period of time.

For ICT, I would have liked to go deeper into the matter. You cannot learn everything in a two months short course, so therefore it would be great to offer a longer ICT course for after the short course to go deeper into it. The same goes for English.

8. Where do you see yourself in ten years?

I want to have a family with kids and even more important, I want to work self-employed. I really want to be self-employed as I don’t like working under somebody, like a company or an organization. I come here in the morning and leave in the evening and I don’t like that. I always have to be here even though I don’t have a lot of work, but if you’re self-employed, you can manage your time in a more efficient way. In life we have different responsibilities and you have to fulfil them, so when you are self-employed, you can do that better, you can decide when to work and when to do other things.

9. How are you going to reach there?

I started on my journey by starting my own business and it will grow slowly by slowly. After three years, it will be somewhere else.
**Interview William Ochieng**

Name: William Ochieng  
Age: 22  
Core Course round: 1  
Actual occupation: Sound Technician and Music, Dance and Drama (MDD) group teacher

1. **Can you tell me about your background before joining the PYC (education, family (parents, siblings), etc.)?**

I grew up from a polygamous family with one father and four wives, all in the same house. From my mother I have two siblings, one brother and one sister. I grew up close to the boarder of Kenya in a place called Busia. My primary school I did there up to P7, and then for my Senior 1 I came to Kampala. In Kampala I stayed in Namuyongo where I still live. For my A-levels, I changed my school to Nsambya. Afterwards I went to university but I dropped out after one year because of financial problems. After that, I joined Fontes Foundation’s youth centre. I did the ICT short course and the core course at the same time as the core course already started. I already had some computer skills so it was nothing too new, so it was ok to do both at the same time.

I am the last born in my whole family of 27 kids, which is enough for two full football teams (laughs). Some of them are working, some of them are still at school, and so on. All my siblings were able to get school education up to S6, and some even have diplomas and degrees. Most siblings are in Kampala but some of them live abroad. In Kampala we have a permanent house in Luzira where we normally gather all together.

2. **In your opinion, which kind of skills did you lack to become successful in your professional life before you join the PYC?**

At first I joined the youth centre to gather some more computer skills. I already had computer skills, but I was looking for the designing skills as well as how to make balance sheets on the computer. Besides that, I learned a lot of other things which I didn’t know where there, like personal development and business skills like accounting. I already did accounting at secondary school but only in books, this time it was with computers, which I enjoyed. Regarding personal development, there I learned a lot. Knowing who you are, your capabilities and weaknesses, what you can achieve. I also learned a lot about management, may it be a company, a family or even yourself. There is always somebody in a time that manages and carries the team, and it’s not always the official leader.

Everything that I mentioned here is not provided by the official Uganda school system. They only teach what is on the curriculum and what is in the books like history and basic business, but they only tackle them on top. One reason for the youth unemployment in Uganda is that they study all their lives but most of their knowledge is not useful to them afterwards. Ever since P7, I studied biology until S3, in which I wasn’t interested and that was not useful for me. Only in S5 we can start focusing on things that we are interested in.

3. **What are the main reasons for youth unemployment in Uganda according to you?**

The problem comes with the education itself. It is very theoretical, and then in the real world, it is completely different, they teach you stories at school.
The government is also to blame as they don’t offer markets for the goods that people are producing, they prefer importing from abroad. But those products would be available in Uganda with the same quality but at a much cheaper price. The reason why the government is doing this is because they want to keep Uganda poor and unemployed to attract foreign investors.

Abilities: African children don’t get the chance to develop and practise their abilities. If a child grows up playing football all the time or dancing, the parents would never allow him or her to do this professionally. This was supposed to be for spoiled children according to my family and I had to do it secretly, but today I can earn a living with it. Children’s rights are generally a problem in Ugandan families. You cannot do what you want and what you like in the area where you are good at but you have to do what brings most money. A child has to do what it likes to do it at its best.

Lack of education: most children in Uganda are not educated enough. The free schools provided by the government are not efficient enough. One teacher can teach up to 200 students in one classroom, so students don’t learn very well. Those teachers are also underpaid and therefore don’t deliver, which has a very bad impact on the education system. There is also the practice of forging diplomas and degrees in Uganda, you just have to go to a printing centre and after a few hours you have your degree. Education, especially at university level, is very expensive in Uganda and they learn too many unnecessary things. Children can only specialise very late in their education, for ten years, they teach you a variety of subjects, before you can choose a major. All this time of general education seems to be wasted time for me. It should be the other way around, that the child has general education for three years and then you pick the subject that you’re most interested in and to come out successful. But today, very often your parents tell you what to study because they pay for your school fees. Only afterwards when you have some money you can choose the course that you want to do. A child should concentrate on one thing instead of multiple ones.

Job criteria: employers focus too much on papers and not enough on skills. They don’t choose the people who have skills but no papers. It should be more balanced between skills and papers, but at the moment they are measuring at the papers.

4. How can those causes for youth unemployment be mitigated/fought?

The education system has to be changed from theoretical to more practical, already from early childhood onward. The child should also be supported in what they are good at and what they like to do. I had too much history during school, which I feel was a waste of time. To fight this problem, the masses have to be mobilized about children’s rights and human rights. Through children knowing their rights they will learn to fight for what they want. To fight youth unemployment in all Africa, you have to start at the education system from childhood onward. African societies are too backward-driven and the parents took the future of their children in their own hands, they don’t care about what the child wants. It has to start with the kids so that when they are grown up they don’t behave like their parents.

5. Which actors should be involved to fight youth unemployment in Uganda?

First it should be the government. The government should make it easier to allocate jobs outside of Uganda, it is difficult to get a passport. In Nigeria for example the government does a lot to promote working abroad which is why you find Nigerians all over the work being successful.
NGO’s also are actors to bring change, as well as the cultural leaders in Uganda. Also spiritual leaders have an important role in teaching human rights as they are one of the bigger institutions in Uganda with a lot of influence.

Also the parents are an important actor, they have to be sensitized as well as the community at large. The media, especially the social media, should also sensitizing more as a lot of today’s youth uses them.

6. **In what way was the PYC able to improve your situation?**

I got business skills. At the moment, I am helping other people with their business plans and their budgets for business proposals because a lot of people don’t know how to do it. Personal development has been very inspiring for me because I learned who I am, how to manage myself, how to control myself, and understanding the community at large. The computer skills as well of course as during university, people don’t have any ICT training, only if you specifically decide to study ICT. Students have computers and laptops at university, but they don’t really know how to do it. In the core course, I used a lot of excel and word and power point, which is very relevant in practise.

7. **What should be added to the Potentiam Youth Development Centre to improve the training that youth can receive there?**

Sex education would be a valuable addition to the curriculum, not only about HIV/AIDS, but also family planning. If a girl gets pregnant very early in their life, they drop out of school or can only do low skilled jobs because of her other responsibilities.

Having movie nights with inspirational movies. Most youths today are very much into media, so they would get information much better by watching a movie instead of a teacher talking about things.

It would be good to have sports. Like that, you get to know each other better, you learn how to communicate with each other and you don’t just come to the centre and leave again in the evening without a lot of social interaction. You don’t know your class mates, what they do, etc. It would be important to create a big network both for your private and professional life. I suggest to have group competitions, games that are easy to learn like table tennis tournaments. You could also use the football pitch for tournaments, like short courses against the core course.

It would also be good to have more practical sessions like in the single mother’s program.

8. **What are limitations for the suggestions of improvement mentioned above?**

Space could be a limitation because those things need space. Another limitation is mobilization as a lot of people in the area don’t know about the centre and its courses.

9. **Where do you see yourself in ten years?**

I see myself as a business man and in the music industry. I’m a choreographer and I’m doing theatre dancing. I would like to do both composing, teaching and participating in those fields.

10. **How are you going to reach there?**

I’m doing an education in managing sound systems at the moment because I already have the skills there, but not the paper. So I’m going to do the theoretical bit of it to get a diploma which will take me two years.
B. Focus Group Discussions

The focus group discussions have been carried out during two personal development classes of the core course round 3 and 4 at the Potentiam Youth Development Centre. The author has led the discussion with the support of the personal development facilitators (Ife Piankhi on the 22nd March and Edwin Kamurasi on the 12th December), who were “breaking the ice” with the students and helped the author to keep the discussion running. This was crucial for the results of the focus group discussions as the outcome would most likely have been unsatisfying in the absence of the facilitators as the students would have been intimidated by the author, who is a “Muzungu” and also the Regional Coordinator of Fontes Foundation in Uganda. But with this set up, the students opened up very quickly and fruitful discussions took place in the two 3-4 hours long sessions.

B1. Focus group discussion with core course round 3 on the 22nd March 2014

As the first focus group discussion took place at the beginning of the processing time of this master thesis, the questions were of a more general nature and not explicitly tailored towards the PYC. As the author was also not yet sure about how successful such a focus group discussion with the core course students is going to be at that point in time, he used a more “playful” and indirect approach to get to the real issue, which is youth unemployment in Uganda. One part of the focus group discussion also aimed at comparing the (un-)employment situation of youth to Europe, which indicated interesting and sometimes surprising perceptions of both the African as well as the “Western” culture and labour market.

Transcript of the flip chart sheets from the discussion session

1. Livelihood in different places/situations

1.1. What skills/characteristics/material things does it need to make a livelihood in the “traditional” village?

- Land
- Livestock
- Big homes
- Share resources
- Food
- Farming skills
- Being initiative/innovative
- Saving skills
- Modern technologies → willingness to learn new things
- Vocational skills → to create things
- Networking skills
- Good work ethic
- Marketing/selling skills
- Being organised and working together
- Joining groups/associations (e.g. youth groups, sports clubs)
- Relationships based on trust and respect with elders and LCs

19 Muzungu is the Swahili and Luganda word for “white man”, a notation that is commonly used by Ugandans when talking about or addressing white people.
Having a good reputation

1.2. What skills/characteristics/material things does it need to make a livelihood in the “modern” city (e.g. Kampala)?

- Good social and communication skills
- Need to be mobile
- One has to be a good researcher → knowing where to get information
- Good work ethic
- IT literate
- Willing- and readiness to learn
- Innovative → even more important in the city
- Positive attitude
- Literacy skills
- One needs a job → no self-subsistence farming!
- One has to take risk and has to be able to do critical thinking
- One has to be hard-working and focused
- Self-confidence → more competitive environment, greater variety of different people, cultures and values
- Passion about what you are doing

1.3. What skills/characteristics/material things does it need to make a livelihood in the “West” (e.g. Europe/US)?

- Good time management
- Good communication skills
- Hard working → clear goals and focus
- Being very competitive
- Education has to be on a high level
- High social skills → here, people (especially Ife) did not agree with each other → do we really have high social skills in the west??
- Ability to build bridges between people

2. What are the reasons for (youth) unemployment in Uganda?

- Laziness
- Dislike of certain jobs
- Education is too theoretical
- Negative attitude
- Tribalism/nepotism
- High level illiteracy
- Too strict parental control of children/wrong career guidance
- Sexual harassment in a lot of jobs → scares women away from working
- Growing population increase
- Increased corruption → promised funds to develop the youth do not reach
- Wrong parenting skills of youth’s parents
- Little or no payment for a lot of jobs
- Racism → black people are less likely to be hired or are exploited at work by Indians, whites, Chinese, etc.
- Unserious job offers → people offer you a job but in the end, it is not really a job, they just fool you
- Poor background of a lot of people → makes it not impossible, but more difficult to succeed
- Lack of honesty amongst youth → today’s youth has a bad reputation amongst employers
- Negative group pressure → pressures youth to do stupid/counter-productive things
- Lack of economic growth in Uganda
Drugs and alcohol

3. How can the youth gain the necessary skills to make a successful livelihood?

- Youth trainee schemes (government-led)
- Re-integrate prisoners into society by training them/let them work in prison
- More practical training during education → hands-on approach, also at universities
- Independent learners → students have to be motivated to think for themselves
- Education and training has to be according to the interests and talents of the students, and not their parents!
- Education has to focus on personal development
- Conferences/workshops to train youth in certain fields by NGOs, government, companies, etc.
- Create job opportunities in villages → regional balance through boosting the agricultural sector, rural food industry, stone quarries, dairy industry, etc. Also improve infrastructure
- More on-the-job training

4. Youth unemployment in Europe

4.1. What are the problems of youth in Europe?

- Necessity of experience in most jobs
- Demographic development
- Lack of land
- Too much freedom → creates bad attitudes
- Over-population
- Economic recession

4.2. How can those problems be tackled?

- Restrict freedom of youth
- Caning kids from time to time → here the opinions were very different
- Spend more time and interact with children as in Africa → here, a very controversial discussion started → is this really better in Africa??
- Closeness to mother after birth → put them on the back, and not in a stroller!
- Limit the use of technology → more manpower again, less robots
- Ability to repair/recycle things → don’t just throw away and replace everything, try to fix it
- Ability to be social in business → not only in the board room, but also on a personal basis → increases your chances to find jobs in the future through contacts
- Focus on internal affairs in Western countries before going abroad → e.g. US
B2. Focus group discussion with core course round 4 on the 12th December 2014

At this point in time (December 2014), the content and the outline of this master thesis was clear and therefore the second focus group discussion aimed much more specifically at the questions underlying the thesis. After evaluating the first focus group discussion, it also became clear that the questions can be asked much more directly as it has been realized after the first focus group discussion that the students are very well capable of thinking in the specific context. It also turned out that during both focus group discussions, vivid discussions and small arguments developed between students or group of students on certain topics, like for example tribalism or physical punishment of youth.

*Transcript of the flip chart sheets from the discussion session*

**Definitions:**

*Unemployment:* having no job for which you get a formal reward

*Livelihood:* way to get by; how to get the means to survive

1. **What does it need to make a successful livelihood in Uganda?**
   - Having a job
   - Being creative → create a job!
   - Being focused, set goals and achievements
   - Savings → you need a source of income
   - Use your assets → land farm, animals
   - Source of inspiration + guidance
   - Pulling funds together
   - Attend workshop/business meetings to meet other business people
   - You have to look beyond your current job
   - Also support community around you
   - Commitment & determination
   - Discipline → financial
   - Action-oriented
   - Self-confidence
   - God-fearing
   - Love what you do
   - Be patient
   - Motivation → having role models
   - Being hardworking and persistent/resilient
   - Taking risks
   - Time management
2. **Why is a big part of today’s youth not able to make a livelihood in Uganda (reasons for youth unemployment)?**
   - Low self-esteem
   - Lack of motivation
   - Lack of connections → people give you jobs and advice
   - Old people don’t resign so that young one’s can take it
   - Too high expectations of employers → e.g. experience required
   - Youth is lazy and too picky with jobs → too much pride
   - Class discrimination
   - No ambition/self-drive
   - Tribe discrimination
   - Job distribution on basis of family ties
   - Victim mentality
   - Religious discrimination
   - Over-spending of money by youth
   - No reason to live, no goals, no ambition
   - Reliance on inheritance
   - Youth likes quick money
   - Wrong approach in job searching
   - Cultural restrictions to youth

3. **How can the youth gain the necessary skills to make a successful livelihood (how to fight youth unemployment in Uganda)?**
   - Change of mind-set, willingness to learn
   - Attending seminars
   - Read academically, go to school
   - Mentors, role models
   - Vocational training
   - Parental and societal guidance /teaching
   - Student exchange program
   - Reduce salaries of government officials to create more jobs
   - Fight inflation
   - Enforce retirement policies to free jobs for youth
   - Schools/universities should employ students
   - More practical curriculum at university
   - More choice of subjects at school
   - More possibility for volunteering (programs)
   - Leaders should become role models
• Use media to put pressure on government
• Have stricter rules and laws and enforce them
• Fight corruption
• Peaceful demonstrations

4. **How can an organisation like Fontes Foundation/the PYC contribute to fight youth unemployment in Uganda? What would you add to the program to make it more successful?**
   • Vocational (practical) skills → mostly in the technical area
   • Student ID’s → for legitimisation in front of authorities and to advertise the centre
   • New laptops
   • Connect students to jobs → offer internships
   • Provide funds for business plans of students
   • First aid kit
   • Cantina
   • Games → sports, recreational activities
   • Art classes, yoga

5. **Where do you see limitations for the fight of youth unemployment in Uganda, especially in regard of Fontes Foundation/PYC (in response to the answers from above)?**
   • Decision-makers are not willing to change their behaviour
   • Parents/society suppresses innovation
   • Corruption → money allocated to youth doesn’t end up there
   • Police bullying → police scares people and there hinders change
   • Religious beliefs hinders change
   • Funding → interest rate is too high, availability of funds for Fontes
   • Access to and knowledge of technological sources
   • Lack of moral support
C. Documentation from Fontes Foundation

In the remaining part of the appendix, Fontes Foundation documents are listed which have been used for quotes in this master thesis but which are not publicly available. This does not mean though that those documents are containing any organizational secrets, they are just nowhere available in the internet or in hard copy which is why they have been put into the appendix for transparency reasons to properly verify the sources used in this thesis. As the documents listed below are not considered classified by Fontes Foundation, the author has the authorization from the organization to attach the documents without signing a declaration of discretion.

For practical reasons, in the case of extensive documents (e.g. the PYC annual report 2012/13 or the YBU concept note), only the relevant chapters have been attached to avoid the unnecessary and artificial inflation of the appendix, which is already exhaustive given the students interviews, the focus group discussions and the FF documentation. If needed, the full documents can be requested from the author or Fontes Foundation under michael.pletscher@fontes.no or contact@fontes.no.
A small Norwegian NGO, Fontes Foundation

Being a small NGO

www.fontesfoundation.no

Fontes Foundation – General Brochure (2011a).
Potentiam Youth Development Centre Concept Note (2012)
### Core Activities

- **Recreation:** Sports, dance, drama
- **Personal Development:** Computer, English, Business

### Fundraising Opportunities

- **Membership:** Individual, Family, Corporate

### Key Events

- **September:** Opening of the facility
- **October:** Grand Opening and launch of programs
- **November:** Annual Community Seminar
- **December:** Holiday Gala

### Focus on Core and Enrichment in Language

- **Focus on Core:** Language, math, science
- **Enrichment in Language:** Reading, writing, spelling

### Speaker Series

- **December 8:** Local author's book launch
- **January 5:** Poetry slam

### Course Offered

- **ESL:** English as a Second Language
- **Gymnastics:** Beginner and advanced levels
- **Dance:** Contemporary and hip-hop

### Membership Benefits

- **Individual:** Access to all programs
- **Family:** Discounts on classes and programs

### Additional Information

- Please visit our website for more details.
- Contact us for any questions or concerns.
Potentiam Recruitment Hub

In 2013 Global unemployment rose and in Uganda the unemployment rate is currently at 68%. The Potentiam youth Centre was started in 2012 to provide training, capacity building, personal development and mentoring to youth in order to make them more employable and ultimately improve their livelihoods. Fontes Foundation did a needs assessment before embarking on this project and the concept of the Potentiam Youth Development Centre was designed around the gaps that were found. The Centre has registered a fairly high success rate since its conception in 2012 graduating 147 youths and putting 82% of the youth in employment within the first 2 months of completing the course at the Centre. However demand is high now for the services at the centre and the numbers have increased so to meet the demand and avail more youth with employment, the Centre is proposing a recruitment component that will link more employers with a quality workforce in both the formal and informal sector. Through intense training and personal development, the Centre continues to turn school dropouts into a formidable workforce with great attitudes and a willingness to work and succeed.

Objectives

- The Programme will assess, support and train young people and provide them with various employment services.
- Working in co-location with partners to coordinate services it will reduce duplication aiming to move 18-35 year old students into work as quickly as possible. In addition to key partners, we also engage with a wide variety of small partner organisations to maximise support to young people in Uganda.
- A dedicated Employer Adviser & Business Advisory team based on site, will focus on sourcing work opportunities, jobs and other work-focused opportunities suited to the needs of our youth.
- Provide detailed information on job-search skills, sourcing vacancies, promoting digital job-search methods, producing and updating CVs and will include workshops on having a strong work ethic and the benefits of being in work.
- The Hub will provide internet services to encourage drop in and to give access to online vacancies, CV preparation.
- Continuous coaching and confidence building of youth who have more difficult barriers to overcome in unemployment.
About Fontes

Fontes Foundation Uganda is a small, local NGO with Norwegian roots. Our mission is to empower disadvantaged Ugandan communities. Taking a distinct long-term view on community development problems, we create innovative and integrated solutions in the safe water and education sectors. Through extensive research and continuous learning, Fontes can implement superior and more sustainable solutions.

Accountability and transparency are more than buzzwords to us. We are convinced that only by being reliable, trustworthy and open we will receive continuous support from our donors and only in this way we can invite communities to adopt these crucial principles as well.

We encourage our staff, our students and the broader community to think out-of-the-box, because we believe that disadvantaged communities need fresh solutions from proactive people.

Being an entrepreneurial NGO, Fontes has a strong network and is highly regarded in the Ugandan business community. Through our consulting branch and our membership in several business associations we understand the needs of Corporates and can help them achieve their goals.

The Potentiai Youth Centre

The PYC was set up following the request of the Tukhole Youth Group. After an extensive research effort by Fontes it became clear that the main obstacles of the youth in this area are:

- Unemployment
- Lack of education
- Lack of start-up capital for businesses
- Lack of practical skills
- Lack of creativity
- HIV/Aids

It has become PYC's goal to address this issues in an integrated way. Consequently, the curriculum of the various courses are designed to bring at least 70% of the students in productive activity at least 18 month after completion of the course.

Many students join the Youth Centre through one of the two short courses in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) or Business English. These 8-week programmes are designed for students with any educational background and aim to lay the foundation for the longer core course.

The core course takes six month and includes modules in Applied Business Skills, Business English, ICT and Personal Development. The focus of the education lies at the development of practical skills, something which is clearly missing in the formal education system. Ultimately, it is designed to build the necessary capacity to successfully find and run a business.

Parallel to the courses, a mentorship program connects the students with experienced and successful personalities from the Ugandan business community. Its purpose is to create a fruitful exchange, fostering the students' personal development, providing them advice and to a lesser extent helping them to get the necessary contacts for finding employment.

A session with Uganda renowned motivational speaker Ethan Musokei

Improving spoken English boosts confidence during job interviews and interactions with Potential employers. The Centre has a full time English instructor working with the students.
The proposal

The below proposal for a recruitment hub should be seen as a general outline. We are happy to discuss and adapt the concept in order to accommodate for the interests of the partner.

Overview

Through the recruitment programme, the Potentia Youth Centre intends to place more disadvantaged youth into employment in order to create a sustainable livelihood for them and their families. The already established Potentia Youth development centre will provide additional services on top of the already existing training it is providing to the youth to make sure they are not just employable, but employed.

The Centre will hire a dedicated recruitment and Business development advisor to ready students and the community for work. This will include input in their CVs, mock interviews and workshops on how to source for job opportunities.

It will provide ICT and Internet services including a database of employers with job postings suited to the youth. This information will be continuously updated to be kept relevant. The beneficiaries will also be able to send their applications with guidance from the Centre online if needed be.

The programme will conduct workshops and counseling of the youth in addition to the personal development it is already providing at the Centre.

Follow up even after employment will be done to ensure that the beneficiaries maintain the employment.

The beneficiaries will be charged a fee after placement which will go back towards the sustainability of the programme.

Keeping a satisfied client base of employees is essential to the sustainability of the programme. Each of the beneficiaries will have a mentor who will act as a reference point to the employer and also to provide general support to the beneficiaries.

Service rates for the Programme

The Centre charges 50,000kshs as a commitment fee for the 6-month Core Course and 20,000kshs for the Short Course. All running costs for the courses is covered by the Bolder Foundation in Norway. However, funds do not extend to the services provided on completion of the course. To sustain the programme, the Centre requires funding and some of it will come from the beneficiaries.

All beneficiaries upon placement will be required to pay the equivalent of 50% of their first earnings back to the programme to benefit others.

Business Advisory Services

The students of the Core Course are required to write a Business plan based on research in their communities. However, on completion of the course many of them struggle to start the businesses. Our experience in the Water and Sanitation Sector shows that sustainable capacity building is a long-term undertaking and needs constant follow-ups. Therefore, we propose to provide post graduation services to the students in form of business advisory. For those who manage to start, in order to avoid the struggle to stay in business, services like auditing the financial records, give advice and re-explain book keeping and accounting, visit the business, challenge and consult the beneficiary on general business strategy, budgeting, stock-keeping, marketing etc. It will also support the beneficiaries also to be able to access financial services for their businesses like micro loans.

In the long-term, successful alumni from the programme could get more and more involved in the BDS. For a small fee or perhaps they can share their experiences, provide best practices and inspire other borrowers.

Students at the Potentia youth Centre during an ICT session where they are taught how to apply ICTs in developing their business plans.

Eligibility of Beneficiaries

The Centre has to maintain a reputation of providing motivated, enthusiastic, solutions oriented workers with great attitudes towards work. The beneficiaries are therefore required to go through the Core Course taught at the youth Centre which provides a holistic training in ICT, Basic English, Applied Business skills and Personal Development, all of which contribute to the quality of workers provided.

Providing students with the confidence and skills that they need to go out and explore the job market.
**Budget Estimates for the Programme**

**Initial cost of starting the programme**

The costs reflected are an estimate based on current costs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment consultant</td>
<td>1 (Annual)</td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
<td>14,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>18,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>3,600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>36,000,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Software Costs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Off to work workshops</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Assistant</td>
<td>1 (Annual)</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running costs (stationary, utilities)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
<td>Is</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Is</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>24,000,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grand Total** 60,000,000

**Total in USD** 23,076

**Summary**

According to the Ugandan Government, around 500,000 youth graduate from higher education centers per year, but only about 80,000 get jobs. This does not include all the youth that never make it to higher education institutions, due to high school fees, secondary school and university. A number of skills training initiatives have failed. In some cases the youth are not able to use their practical skills after finishing the education and simply sell off the start up tools they received. The dangers of having unemployed and discontented youth with no hope or vision for the future around the city has suddenly been brought to the attention of government officials, local leaders, NGOs and donors alike. The Government of Uganda has made employment for young one of its priorities in the new term that started recently. However, this will not be enough because Uganda has one of the most youthful populations in the world with 50% of the population below the age of 14. T

This makes an exacerbation of the problem inevitable in future, and calls for immediate action. This was established during the assessment study that Fontes conducted in 2011 before initiating the youth project. Another important realization was the disconnect between the unemployed labour force and the employers. Employers seem to be seeking qualified, and competent workers and the labor force does not meet the demand because most of the youth have poor attitudes towards work.

The Potential Youth Centre is working to adjust the attitudes through intense personal development and providing adequate training to dropouts to turn them into competent workers that employers want to hire. The recruitment Hub is therefore the next step in the grand plan of linking the existing trained and well adjusted youth to potential employers. For the annual cost of 60,000,000 shs or $23,000 the Centre can ensure the employment of up to 100 young school dropouts in Uganda.
Fontes Foundation

About Fontes Foundation

Fontes Foundation is a small and innovative non-profit NGO providing piped water systems and youth empowerment projects in Uganda. We strive to become an increasingly more specialised organisation, producing appropriate solutions applying the latest technologies to supply the demands of peripheral communities and disadvantaged youth in Uganda. With a long-term perspective, Fontes emphasises project implementation in an adequate manner where the community is involved from day one and where each community is addressed based on their unique characteristics. Therefore, much of our work is made on the basis of extensive research and continuous learning. Stakeholder empowerment and skills development allows for self-management and generates a feeling of ownership of the projects, which in turn translates into sustainability. We conduct our activities based on rules of transparency and accountability, not only to honor the support from our donors, but also to be an example to our beneficiaries.

We can refer to ten years of activity in Uganda to support our approach. Through these years, Fontes has established a strong network and a respected reputation as a professional NGO.

Our Water Projects

Safe drinking water is not easily accessible for many Ugandans with several negative consequences for the local populations. Not only is the unprepared water bad for peoples’ health, for many Ugandans getting water requires hours of work as the nearest water source may be up to 8 kilometres away. The water projects are intended not only to provide drinking water but also to contribute to the communities in other ways. For example, a lot of effort is put into transforming the local water committees into well-functioning democratically elected Community Based Organisations as inspiration for the rest of the community. In our experience, safe water is an important basis for the overall development of our project villages. Effective maintenance of the operational standard and initial infrastructural investments are addressed by annually cross-communal conferences for exchange of ideas and confrontation of issues.

Our Nursery and Primary School Projects

Education is key to development. Despite the awareness of this, not everyone is able to pay the expenses of education. For the population in Queen Elizabeth Na-

Children of Mama Barbara Nursery School during a celebration.

People of one of the local community are fetching water at one of the public tap station installed by Fontes Foundation.
School and other donors, have since 2005 supported the Katunguru Primary School and its about 100 students. Pre-primary education is not provided for by the government in Uganda and subsequently the necessary facilities are often highly provisional. Fontes Foundation is supporting three kindergartens in Kanungu District, Southwest Uganda, with over 300 children between 2 and 5 years with classroom buildings, uniforms, teaching materials and latrines.

**Our Scholarship Projects**

Education is a privilege of advantaged families in Uganda and most students in the peripheries drop out of school after finishing their primary education due to lack of funding. In the Queen Elizabeth National Park, where people rely on fishing for an income, the majority of the families cannot support their children’s school fees. Since 2006, Fontes Foundation has supported students from Queen Elisabeth National Park. With help from donors, the students’ school fees, study materials, transport and other necessities are covered. In addition, a local coordinator follows up the students academically and morally, and the students are also involved in Fontes’ other activities in the villages, like the water projects.

![Some of the scholarship students supported by Fontes Foundation are relaxing in a park.](image)

**Our Youth Project**

According to the African Development Bank, youth unemployment in Uganda is estimated to be 83%, the highest in Africa. Part of the reason has to do with Uganda’s “youth bulge”: 78% of the population is under 30 and more than 50% is below 15 years. Failure to access the labour market and finding a place in society results in many youths being absorbed into crime, drugs, violence and prostitution. Fontes Foundation’s Potentiom Youth Centre in Kampala is designed to address the issue of urban youth unemployment. Focusing on three main areas, namely conditional skills (English and technology and communications skills), practical skills (business and entrepreneurship skills) and personal development, the goal is to create entrepreneurs or good employees, enhance the self-confidence and attitudes demanded by employers and the labour market, such as creativity, good work ethics, team work, leadership and responsibility. To help the students get to this point, each student is also given a personal mentor helping them through the course (6 months) and 18 months post graduation and into the professional life.

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Holder: Koestler

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[Follow Fontes Foundation on Facebook and Twitter!](https://www.facebook.com/fontesfoundation)
Monitoring and Evaluation

6 months post graduation evaluation

The evaluation mainly looked at the progress that the students have managed to make during the 6 months after they graduated and left the Centre and what their future plans are. It also compared the goals and aspirations of the students at the time they joined the course, at the end of the course and 6 months after the course. Subsequent evaluations are also carried out 12 months and 18 months after completion of the course.

Findings

Current occupation

In looking at the rate of success of the Core course, when a survey was done at the end of the course some of the students had already been invited to join different businesses as employees and others had started their own business. The question of their current occupation status 6 months after the course is answered through 4 main questions:

1. Do you have a job or regular occupation to earn a living?
2. If yes, what is your salary (It would be interesting to see if they get higher salaries after completing the course)?
3. How many jobs have you applied for since the end of the course?
4. How many months did it take you to get a job/occupation?

At the point of 6 months after the Core Course was completed, the findings showed that 82% of the students have some kind of employment. 55% of the employment is in the informal sector, 18% in the formal sector and 18% in both formal and informal sectors combined.

The salary scale of these graduates ranges from UGX 80,000/- a month up to UGX 900,000/- per month. 80% of these incomes are regular with only two of them fluctuating depending on the number of jobs and season of a given month.

There are only a few students who applied for more than one or two jobs before they were taken on for employment. The student with the most applications had 8 applications and was able to secure a job within 2 weeks of completing the course.

A number of students had made only one application, but despite this, 80% of the students were able to be taken on for employment within a month of completing the course.

Impact of the centre on the goals of the beneficiaries

The question on what the student goals are 6 months after completing the course were answered by 5 questions:

1. What are your goals?
2. Do you run a business?
3. If not, do you have plans on starting a business?
4. If yes, what kind of business?
5. If not, why not?

90% of the students who graduated from the short course have big goals. These are range from being able to continue with their education to being able to independently sustain themselves. 90% of the students wanted to be able to start up their own businesses although, as per the date the survey was done not many of them had managed to get this accomplished. They had all concluded that it was probably easier to first acquire a job where they would be employed by someone else, but would earn some money and intend to save up enough to start their businesses. 3 students have managed to set up their own businesses, two of whom have them as a side income on top of a formal job and one has partnered with a friend to run the business he started.

The students that are not interested in starting a business are looking at starting a business any time soon have given two main reasons, i.e.

- A lack of startup capital
- The need to first return to school

Students response to question of impact of the course to their lives

Feedback from the students showed that 100% of the students that graduated from the course felt more confident and this was attributed to a number of factors, with need the personal development and business elements having the largest impact.

Evaluations are carried out in intervals of 6 months, 12 months and 18 months after graduation
External Discussion Draft
5 Oct 2014

**YBU Response**

As a consequence of the above described challenges, youth all over the country, and in particular those that have dropped out of school, are struggling to find their place in society. This results in a huge inactive workforce that is not able to realize their potential and contribute to the development of the country. YouthBuild provides a model from which the main tenants of the Skilling Uganda policy can be put into practice, including more practically-oriented BTVET pedagogy with the inclusion of skills necessary to perform well in modern work environments, including communication, computer literacy, customer service, problem solving, work attitudes and ethics; industry designed curriculum, assessment and certification relevant to the skills demanded in the economy; increased access to non-formal training programs targeted to youth who have dropped out of school before completing primary school; and a results-oriented model focused on achieving youth employment outcomes.

YBU’s core components include: 1) recruitment and mobilization of youth; 2) orientation and expectation setting in order to prepare youth for the rigors of the program; 3) basic skills (literacy and numeracy) and life skills training in order to prepare youth to effectively enter the labor market; 4) vocational training in general construction skills and an opportunity for advanced vocational skills training in selected construction occupations, including pre-apprenticeship opportunities; 5) community asset building (CAB) where youth will apply their skills and leadership potential to create tangible community assets like housing and youth centers; and 6) post-graduation support in finding and keeping employment. A program cycle will last 12 months, which includes 9 months of training and 3 months of post-graduation support and follow-up. Participants will receive ongoing counseling and support from program facilitators who will serve as case managers throughout the program’s training and post-graduation periods.

YBU provides a focus on preparing youth to enter the construction industry. However, not all participants are expected to enter the construction sector as the overall training is designed to prepare and equip youth for any of the growth sectors across the Ugandan economy (agriculture, hospitality industry, ICT, business management and financial, mining and engineering, oil and gas, and environmental technologies sectors). During the 9-month training,

Gregg: I wanted to raise a question here about how you arrived at the program length. No doubt you arrive at this conclusion of nine months, full time, with three months of follow up through discussions with the partners. But let me pose the following questions:

1. Is it realistic that the youth constituency we are targeting can be out of the workforce/informal livelihood activities for nine months?
2. Cost: The price tag and per student served amount is high and so, I am wondering if we proposed, in the pilot, a six month program of full time engagement, with four months of follow up support, if we could reduce the cost/student served and there by the overall price tag of this first phase. Also, we might propose a kind of cost/share arrangement with employees for graduates we place in their firms,
where in they pick up the costs of training time/focus that might have been located at YB (with YB bearing the cost) during the first month of the four months (my proposal is four months of follow up, as opposed to 3). We could play with this ‘hybrid’ program space and brand it “The YouthBuild Internship” that is co-designed by employers. (This could be one of the overall program elements we might pitch to the Global Innovation Fund, as a scalable, sustainable model that could attract a much larger host of potential formal sector employers in Uganda).

all participants will receive a basic overview of the construction industry and general training in construction skills in order to prepare them to engage in community asset building projects and gain from the team oriented approach used on a construction site. A self-selected number of participants will go on to receive more in depth and specialized training in one of a few different in-demand occupations within the sector as identified by local industry leaders and in consultation with youth. These include interior and exterior painting, floor and wall tiling, scaffolding, and door and window construction. Additional opportunities for these trainees to participate in a pre-apprenticeship experience that allows the trainee to apply their technical skills in a real worksite and apprenticeships after program graduation will be provided in partnership with private and public sector construction firms.

All program graduates will acquire necessary skills demanded by employers across all Ugandan industry sectors (transferable work readiness skills) and to build their own businesses should they focus their efforts on small business development. Employers will play a key role throughout the process in developing training curriculum and establishing standards for training and certification within the construction sector. The program will build off of the early success of the Worker’s PAS initiative led by the Ministry of Education’s Directorate of Industrial Training in partnership with the Uganda Association of Private Vocational Institutes (UGAPRIVI), which is developing industry-driven non-formal and informally acquired skill assessment and certification tools.

While young women traditionally have low employment rates in the construction sector and the industry’s labor supply is dominated by males worldwide, YouthBuild has demonstrated great success with engaging and successfully transitioning young women into either further education or training or entering employment through self-employment or formal sector jobs upon graduating from the program. Both Ugandan implementing partners are currently working with more females than males and have engaged their female participants in the program planning process. They are confident that the model will lead to positive outcomes for its female participants due to their planning role and ability to master skills taught within the construction skills training phase of the program. Every effort will be made to ensure that gender-based issues are addressed and integrated into the program’s training and participant support services. This includes HIV/AIDS awareness and sexual and reproductive health education.

Young people in the program will have opportunities to learn, earn, lead, and to make positive impacts in their communities, while also gaining the skills needed to enter or
External Discussion Draft
5 Oct 2014

create their own long-term employment opportunities. The following program objectives will be met:

- **Skills and career pathways development:** Increase in employment opportunities for out-of-school youth through demand driven training in various construction occupations.

- **Personal and life skills development:** Support positive youth development and the transition to adulthood among disadvantaged youth in low-income urban and rural areas in Uganda.

- **Community asset building:** Inspire youth to get involved in their communities and apply their positive energy to strengthen their communities and instill in them a sense of personal responsibility.

- **Leadership capacity and civic engagement:** Provide opportunities for youth to demonstrate leadership and enhance their ability to participate in civil society.

- **Policy and Advocacy:** Influence government policy affecting the social and economic development of marginalized youth in Uganda and harmonize YouthBuild Uganda’s strategies with the policy and program goals of the Government of Uganda at the national, district and local levels.

The cost per student served in the full time, 12 (Gregg...I am not sure you mean 12 months of full time engagement—rather, with your current model, you mean 9 months of full time engagement, and three months of follow up—which, of course, is not full time engagement). Now, as per my proposal above, I am suggesting we change this frame to: 6 months of full time engagement; and 4 months of follow up, inclusive of a one month bridge month to employers. If you go with this frame you then reduce your per/student cost to roughly $2,700 (from $3,500) and thereby take your total price tag for the proposal down from north of $1m ($1.137m) down to: $864,000. This takes into account the cost of start-up capital purchases such as vehicles and construction equipment that has a usable lifespan beyond the two-year pilot period.

**YBU: Implementing Partners**
Two Ugandan-based NGOs, Fontes Foundation, and Peer Link Initiative Uganda will be the lead implementing partners of the YouthBuild Uganda initiative:

**Fontes Foundation Uganda** (Fontes) is a Ugandan NGO with Norwegian roots that seeks to empower disadvantaged Ugandan communities. Taking a distinct long-term view on community development problems, Fontes creates innovative and integrated solutions in the safe water and education and training sectors. In 2012, in cooperation with Takole Youth Group, a local youth group in Bukasa, Kampala, Fontes Foundation designed a project to respond to the needs of urban out-of-school youth in the Bukasa/Muyenga area. A detailed study was carried out to map the problems of the youth, the demands from employers and the existing education and training programs. This study led to the creation of the Potentiam Youth Development Centre, which advances both the personal development and business skills of young people. All aspects of the six-month Core Business Training were developed in a way that supports critical