

Employment, Unemployment, and Working Conditions in the Urban Labor Markets of Sub-Saharan Africa: Main Stylized Facts

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This chapter presents an overview of the main characteristics of urban labor markets and the workers employed in them at the turn of the 21st century. The descriptive analysis of a dozen 1-2-3 surveys conducted in Africa over the last decade establishes several robust stylized facts about the particularities of these markets.¹ The chapter examines a broad sweep of indicators, such as the level of education and the training-employment link; unemployment and underemployment; the distribution of jobs and job properties by institutional sector, especially the informal sector; job quality (earnings and social security coverage); and multiple jobholding. These indicators identify the major trends, which are then studied in detail in the subsequent chapters.

This chapter is structured as follows. The first section describes the sociodemographic characteristics of the 11 cities studied. The second section examines labor force participation. The third section looks at unemployment. The fourth and fifth sections examine the structure of employment and labor force characteristics by institutional sector and earned income and working conditions. The last section takes up the question of employment prospects, with a focus on young people. The chapter devotes special attention to unemployment (which other chapters do not specifically address), the informal sector, and earnings. Where possible, indicators are separated by gender.

Sociodemographic Characteristics

The population in the main cities of the 10 countries studied totaled nearly 20 million people in the first half of the 2000s (table 1.1).² About 9 million

Table 1.1 Population and Demographic Characteristics of 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa

Item	West Africa							WAEMU countries	Central Africa			Indian Ocean
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou		Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
Population (thousands)	3,046	1,143	809	1,906	784	675	856	9,219 ^a	1,907	5,751	1,817	1,248
Percentage of population	17	11	12	22	16	6	7	13	11	10	10	8
Percentage of urban population	39	37	31	53	43	32	37	39	22	35	21	30
<i>Structure by age</i>												
0–14 (percent)	34.0	44.0	36.5	34.6	35.0	43.0	37.6	36.7	33.2	39.9	36.8	40.5
15–59 (percent)	64.2	52.5	60.0	60.8	62.0	54.0	58.7	60.2	63.8	56.0	61.1	55.7
60 and over (percent)	1.8	3.5	3.5	4.6	3.0	3.0	3.7	3.1	3.0	4.1	2.1	3.8
Average age (years)	22.4	21.1	22.8	23.9	23.0	21.2	22.5	22.5	23.5	23.0	21.3	24.2
Median age (years)	21	17	20	20	21	17	19	20	22	19	20	20
Women (percent)	50.6	50.0	52.0	51.5	51.6	50.7	49.5	50.8	49.1	51.3	49.7	50.3
Migrants (percent)	51.0	36.0	38.0	27.6	48.2	36.5	43.0	41.3	53.6	22.3	51.9	19.9

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the following 1-2-3 surveys: Cameroon 2005 (Développement, Institutions et Mondialisation [DIAL] and National Statistics Institute [NSI]); Democratic Republic of Congo 2005 (DIAL and NSI); Madagascar 2001 (DIAL and Institut National de la Statistique [INSTAT]); West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) 2001/02 (Observatoire économique et statistique d'Afrique Subsaharienne [AFRISTAT], DIAL, and NSIs).

Note: Figures for the percentage of the population and the percentage of the urban population should be viewed with caution, as they are based on census figures that can be as much as 10 years old.

a. Total population.

people live in the seven cities in the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU); 1.3 million live in Antananarivo, Madagascar, the only representative of the Indian Ocean region. The cities range in size from Niamey (675,000 inhabitants) to Kinshasa (5.8 million inhabitants).

The cities in West Africa represent a small percentage of their countries' populations (6–7 percent in Niamey and Ouagadougou, 22 percent in Dakar), reflecting the low rates of urbanization in Sahelian Africa. Together the cities studied represent almost 40 percent of the urban population of West Africa. The underdevelopment of secondary cities is particularly severe in Senegal, where 53 percent of the population lives in Dakar. Cameroon has two similar-sized main cities (Yaoundé and Douala), which together account for more than 40 percent of the urban population of Cameroon. Focusing on capital cities makes sense in Africa not only because secondary cities are relatively underdeveloped but also because the characteristics and functioning of labor markets are more homogeneous than and differ greatly from those of other urban areas.

The age distribution of the population displays the classic characteristics of cities in developing countries, with a massive predominance of young people. Across the 11 cities, the average age is 22.5. The inhabitants of Bamako and Niamey are the youngest (average age 21, median age 17). Gender differences in the age distribution are small. Women account for slightly more than half of the population in the 11 cities.

The proportion of migrants (people who have not always lived in the city) is substantial in all 11 cities (see chapters 10 and 11). The lowest proportions are in Antananarivo (20 percent), Kinshasa (22 percent), and Dakar (28 percent). The highest proportions are in Douala (54 percent), Yaoundé (52 percent), and Abidjan (51 percent). Migration is essentially a domestic phenomenon in all of the cities studied: even within WAEMU, the region that is most open to international migration, for example, just 21 percent of migrants are domestic. Migration from abroad accounts for less than 4 percent of migrants in Antananarivo, Kinshasa, and the Cameroonian cities and about 10 percent in Dakar. The share of foreign migrants is higher in Lomé (28 percent) and Abidjan (25 percent).

Half of migrants—including two-thirds of women migrants—would like to join their families. Thirty percent of all migrants cite the desire to find a job as their main reason for migrating (the figure is even higher among men). Twelve percent cite study as the reason for migrating.

Household Composition

The average household size in the cities sampled is 5.1 people, but national averages cover a wide range, from Lomé (3.9 people) to Dakar (7.4 people). More than a quarter of households in Dakar contain 10 or more people. This proportion is less than 5 percent in Lomé and Cotonou. Dakar aside, household size can be used to define two groups of cities: the Sahelian cities (Bamako,

Niamey, and Ouagadougou), with an average household size of 5.6–6.0 people, and the West African coastal cities (Abidjan, Cotonou, and Lomé) and the cities of Central Africa and Madagascar, with an average household size of 4.6 people.

About one in five heads of household is a woman. In the Sahelian countries, the proportion of female household heads is less than 16 percent (less than 10 percent in Bamako). In contrast, in Cotonou, Dakar, and Lomé, the share reaches 25–30 percent.

Education

In West Africa, 30 percent of people 10 and older never attended primary school. This figure is less than 5 percent in Central Africa and the Indian Ocean, two regions that have long promoted schooling (table 1.2). The percentage of people who never attended school is extremely high in Bamako (41 percent), Niamey (36 percent), and Ouagadougou (34 percent). In contrast, just 16 percent of the population in Lomé and 20 percent in Cotonou never attended school. Abidjan (29 percent) and Dakar (31 percent) are in an intermediate position. In Central Africa and Madagascar, there is a tendency to either educate children beyond primary level or to concentrate on the quality of the education provided.

Few changes in the hierarchy between the coastal and Sahelian cities are evident when the focus switches from stock (all cohorts) to flow (people still in school). However, some changes are worth mentioning. Ouagadougou, with a net primary enrollment rate of 79.7 percent, catches up to Cotonou (81.2 percent) and Lomé (83.2 percent). Ouagadougou's net lower secondary school enrollment rate is second after Cotonou's. In contrast, Abidjan and Dakar leave from one-quarter to one-third of their 6- to 11-year-olds out of the system. With a net primary enrollment rate of 65.9 percent, Dakar performs hardly better than Bamako (70.7 percent). Bamako performs worst across most education indicators, in both stock and flow. In Central Africa and Madagascar, Kinshasa has the highest and longest rates of school attendance. Given the failed nature of the state and years of economic and political crises in the Democratic Republic of Congo, this finding is an indicator of the importance the Congolese attach to education.

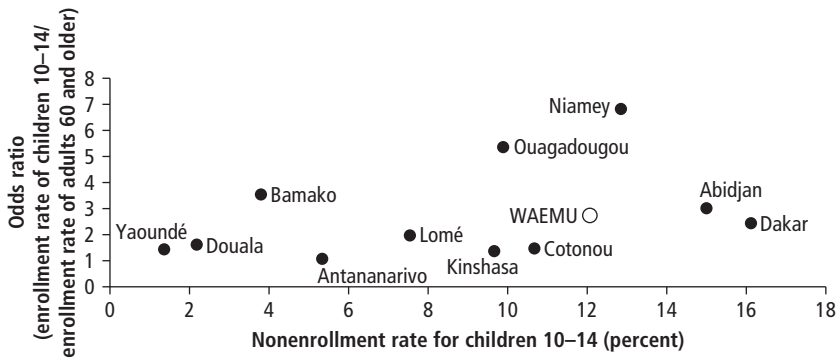
In all 11 cities, the rate of school attendance has grown steadily over the generations. Some cities, such as Ouagadougou and especially Niamey, have experienced spectacular growth. In Niamey, for example, 88 percent of adults 60 and older but just 16 percent of children 10–14 never attended school (figure 1.1). In Ouagadougou, these ratios are 84 percent and 12 percent. Both cities have virtually caught up to cities like Cotonou and Lomé. In the cities where high school enrollment is long established, growth in the rate of school attendance is, of course, less spectacular. In Antananarivo, for example, the younger generation has no greater probability of attending school than its elders, with just 6 percent of each cohort never attending school.

Table 1.2 Education of Population in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa
(percent)

Characteristic	West Africa							WAEMU countries	Central Africa			Indian Ocean
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou		Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
No education (≥10 years old)	28.5	40.8	20.2	31.4	16.1	36.3	33.7	29.7	4.2	4.5	2.7	4.2
Net primary enrollment rate	73.2	70.7	81.2	65.9	83.2	70.5	79.7	73.3	92.6	81.2	90.7	92.3
Net lower secondary enrollment rate	23.0	28.2	33.8	19.9	27.5	28.7	29.4	25.4	63.0	53.9	61.5	39.3
Spoken and written French (≥10 years old)	66.4	49.6	70.9	58.4	72.9	57.4	60.4	62.6	89.2	69.6	91.8	33.0
Postprimary education (≥15 years old)	46.2	38.4	49.2	31.2	47.6	37.2	37.2	41.1	72.6	95.2	75.5	66.3
Higher education (≥20 years old)	13.8	7.1	12.1	7.0	6.8	9.1	6.8	9.9	13.2	16.3	18.6	13.7

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: Age brackets for calculation of net school enrollment rates are as follows: Abidjan, Antananarivo, Cotonou, Douala, Lomé, Yaoundé: 6–10 (primary), 11–14 (secondary); Bamako, Dakar, Kinshasa, Niamey, Ouagadougou: 7–11 (primary), 12–15 (secondary).

Figure 1.1 Intergenerational Changes in School Enrollment in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).
 Note: WAEMU = West African Economic and Monetary Union.

Across the board, growth in school enrollment has gone hand in hand with a narrowing in the gender gap. Dakar posts the best performance. Among adults 60 and older, men are four times as likely to have attended school; this difference narrows to 7 percentage points among children 10–14. At the other end of the scale, girls are still highly disadvantaged compared with boys in Cotonou and especially Abidjan. There is room for improvement everywhere: in none of the countries studied are girls' enrollment rates equal to boys'.

School enrollment rates have risen markedly in the countries studied: despite the severe public finance crisis, increasingly large numbers of children are receiving an education. This quantitative performance has probably been secured at the cost of a marked deterioration in the quality of the education provided, however.

Labor Force Participation

There are more than 14 million people of working age (10 and older) across the cities studied: 6.9 million in West Africa, 6.2 million in Central Africa, and 947,000 in Madagascar. On average, nearly 60 percent of them are in the labor force (employed or unemployed). Among people 15 and older, the labor force participation rate is 70 percent. In Abidjan and Lomé, about 70 percent of the population 10 and older is in the workforce. In Niamey, Dakar, Bamako, and especially Kinshasa, labor force participation is lower and averages about 50 percent of the population 10 and older.

Female Employment in the Labor Market

Labor force participation is almost 15 percentage points higher for men than for women (table 1.3). The largest gaps observed are in Niamey (28 points); Dakar

Table 1.3 Labor Force Participation Rates in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Gender
(percent)

Gender	West Africa							Central Africa			Indian Ocean	
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou	WAEMU countries	Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
Men	70.1	59.3	58.8	62.1	68.9	63.5	66.3	65.3	69.7	50.2	63.2	64.0
Women	60.3	45.6	60.9	41.1	66.9	35.2	49.6	52.5	52.4	35.8	47.7	55.5
WAEMU countries	65.1	52.4	59.9	51.1	67.9	48.8	58.0	58.7	61.2	42.8	55.5	59.7

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: Population 10 and older.

(21 points); Ouagadougou and Douala (17 points); Yaoundé (16 points); and Bamako and Kinshasa (14 points). In Abidjan (10 points) and Lomé (2 points) the gaps are much smaller. In Cotonou, women's participation rates (61 percent) are higher than men's (59 percent).

Variations in labor force participation rates across cities are much more pronounced for women than for men. Less than 20 percentage points separate the highest rate for male workers (70 percent, in Abidjan) from the lowest rate (50 percent, in Kinshasa). In contrast, the differences in female participation rates range from 35 percent (in Kinshasa and Niamey) to 67 percent (in Lomé).

The larger differences for women reflect the social role played by women, who divide their time between domestic activities (including childbearing and rearing) and economic activity in the market. On average, women spend 17 hours (and men 4 hours) a week on domestic activities. The situation is even more unequal in West Africa, where men spend just 2 hours a week on domestic activities and women 17. The least inequitable distribution of domestic chores is in Antananarivo, where men spend 8 hours and women 17. Working women spend more time on domestic activities than women who do not work (18 versus 16 hours), clearly demonstrating the "double day" phenomenon among working women (see chapter 7).

Youth Employment on the Labor Market

Observed labor force participation rates are consistent with the stages of the life cycle. Participation rates rise sharply as people leave the education system and enter the world of work. The peak comes at 30–49, when male participation rates top 85 percent across all cities except Kinshasa. Labor force participation rates start to slide after 50, plummeting after 60.

People 20 and under account for 35 percent of the working-age population (10 and older) in the cities surveyed. Thirty-five percent of these people are active (either working or seeking employment), although the situation varies widely across cities. In Bamako and Niamey, which have the largest percentages of young people, one-quarter of young people work. This proportion is 35 percent in Abidjan and 37 percent in Lomé.

Participation rates are higher for girls than for boys, especially in Abidjan and Cotonou, and more girls than boys are in the labor market. In Cotonou, Abidjan, and Lomé, 35–43 percent of young women work—13–15 percentage points more than their male counterparts. The youth participation rate is lower (less than 25 percent) elsewhere. In Kinshasa, it is just 7 percent, because of the dual effect of higher school enrollment rates and higher inactivity rates (excluding school). The differences between girls and boys are narrower in Kinshasa than elsewhere.

Children in Africa enter the labor market at a very young age. In West Africa, 13 percent of children 10–14 work (table 1.4). The problem is more

Table 1.4 Labor Force Participation Rates in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Age
(percent)

Age	West Africa							Central Africa			Indian Ocean	
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou	WAEMU countries	Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
10–14	16.3	11.2	14.1	9.3	17.2	13.2	9.1	13.0	10.2	1.7	4.5	6.1
15–29	63.0	50.3	56.6	52.1	68.3	42.8	60.6	57.9	57.2	29.3	50.3	58.9
30–49	90.7	81.8	91.1	74.7	93.0	73.6	84.9	85.1	87.1	73.5	88.0	87.7
50+	64.2	53.5	62.6	48.9	60.6	64.1	57.3	57.6	61.8	63.8	62.4	60.3
WAEMU countries	65.1	52.4	59.9	51.1	67.9	48.8	58.0	58.7	61.2	42.8	55.5	59.7

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

severe among girls than boys, with 16 percent of girls and 10 percent of boys participating in the labor force (see chapter 12). The phenomenon is less severe in Central Africa and Madagascar, where more children are in school. Nevertheless, in Douala 1 in 10 children 10–14 works, most of them combining school and work.

Status within the household also affects labor force participation rates. The highest rates are among heads of household (86 percent for all 11 cities), followed by their spouses (62 percent) and household members other than spouses and children (51 percent). In last place come children, with the lowest labor force participation rates (31 percent). Household survival relies first and foremost on the head of household. Where necessary, the strategy is then to mobilize the spouse and other household members. Children are sent to work as a last resort.

Labor force participation rates also vary a great deal by migrant status, with 66 percent of migrants (and 43 percent of natives) participating. These differences reflect the fact that the prospect of working draws migrants to cities.

The Inactive Population

In West Africa, 41 percent of the potential working population do not have and are not looking for a job. In Bamako, Dakar, and Niamey, about half of the population 10 and older is out of the labor force (table 1.4). The two main inactive groups, school children and students, represent between two-thirds and three-quarters of the inactive population in Cameroon and Madagascar (table 1.5). Housewives are the second most important group of inactive people (20 percent in West Africa and about 15 percent elsewhere). The proportion of retirees is small, averaging less than 4 percent, reflecting both a wide-based age pyramid and the need to work after 60 because of the insufficiency of pensions (see chapter 13).

The share and composition of inactive individuals varies across cities. There are proportionally more pupils and students outside West Africa and more inside West Africa in Cotonou and Lomé, and more housewives in Niamey, Dakar, and Bamako.

Almost all (91 percent) of inactive individuals are looked after by their families. Only about 5 percent rely on pension income (work, disability, and so forth). This finding highlights the underdevelopment of institutional transfers, the major role played by solidarity and informal transfers (within and between households), and the massive predominance of earned income in households' total income.

Nearly 70 percent of all inactive individuals chose this status of their own accord, either because they consider themselves too young to work or because they do not need to work to live. However, for 1.85 million inactive individuals (about 30 percent of the inactive population), the absence of work represents a form of hidden unemployment: they have withdrawn from the labor market, either because they believe that the economic situation is too weak or their skills

Table 1.5 Reasons for Inactivity in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa

City	Reason for inactivity (percentage of total)					Number of inactive individuals
	In the education system	Housewife	Retiree	Long illness	Other	
<i>West Africa</i>						
Abidjan	58.4	14.1	3.6	4.7	19.2	812,000
Bamako	56.4	21.1	3.2	6.9	12.4	361,000
Cotonou	70.1	9.6	5.5	5.1	9.7	246,000
Dakar	42.8	28.2	4.5	7.1	17.4	712,000
Lomé	65.3	9.0	4.3	7.7	13.7	192,000
Niamey	46.1	36.3	1.8	6.3	9.5	238,000
Ouagadougou	58.1	18.1	3.0	6.9	13.9	267,000
WAEMU countries	54.7	20.0	3.8	6.1	15.4	2,828,000
<i>Central Africa</i>						
Douala	65.5	13.5	3.4	7.0	10.6	515,700
Kinshasa	57.3	15.0	1.8	5.4	20.5	2,300,000
Yaoundé	74.2	14.1	2.2	5.6	3.9	584,700
<i>Madagascar</i>						
Antananarivo	67.9	17.3	6.0	4.4	4.4	381,500

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

too low to find a job or because they are waiting to hear about a job for which they have applied. On average, people out of the labor force (“discouraged workers”) and the unemployed have two more years of education than people who are truly inactive.

The magnitude of unused labor supply is large in Africa. These people join or withdraw from the labor market depending on the incentives they face (increases in the demand for labor, the real wage, and so forth). The number of jobs that need to be created to mop up unemployment is therefore much higher than the number of unemployed.

Unemployment

Based on the ILO definition of unemployment, there are an estimated 963,000 job-seekers in the 11 cities, which corresponds to an average unemployment rate of 12 percent (table 1.6). The rate is slightly higher in Central Africa and much lower in Madagascar, which enjoyed extremely strong growth in 2001, following a trend that began in the mid-1990s. The highest unemployment rates are in Ouagadougou (15.4 percent), Kinshasa (14.9 percent), and Yaoundé (14.7 percent). The lowest rates are in Antananarivo (4.4 percent) and Cotonou (5.5 percent).

Table 1.6 ILO-Defined Unemployment Rates in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Gender and Age

City	Gender		Age			All	
	Men	Women	10–29	30–49	50+	Percentage	Number
<i>West Africa</i>							
Abidjan	13.1	14.0	17.4	10.0	7.3	13.5	205,400
Bamako	7.1	7.0	10.7	4.6	2.9	7.1	28,000
Cotonou	6.3	4.9	7.3	4.2	3.7	5.5	20,400
Dakar	9.9	14.1	14.4	10.0	6.7	11.7	87,000
Lomé	10.9	5.7	10.4	5.8	7.7	8.2	33,300
Niamey	12.1	15.0	18.7	8.7	11.1	13.1	29,900
Ouagadougou	14.6	16.4	22.4	9.2	5.9	15.4	56,500
WAEMU countries	11.2	11.7	15.2	8.3	6.5	11.4	460,500
<i>Central Africa</i>							
Douala	10.6	15.1	17.8	7.8	9.0	12.5	108,900
Kinshasa	17.3	11.8	26.3	11.2	8.5	14.9	259,100
Yaoundé	11.4	19.2	21.1	9.6	5.0	14.7	108,700
<i>Indian Ocean</i>							
Antananarivo	5.0	3.9	7.9	2.5	1.1	4.4	25,300

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1–2–3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: See text for ILO definition of unemployment.

The ILO definition of unemployment is extremely restrictive. It considers as unemployed only individuals who did not work a job during the reference week, even for an hour; were actively looking for a job; and were available to work it. Expanding this definition to include inactive individuals who may not have looked for a job during the reference month but who are still available to work a job if offered one changes the picture in two important ways. First, the unemployment rates increase from 11 percent to 16 percent in West Africa, from 14 percent to 17 percent in Cameroon, and from 15 percent to 24 percent in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where nearly one in four workers is unemployed under the broader-based definition (data were not available for Antananarivo) (table 1.7). Second, gender gaps widen, as hidden unemployment affects women more than men. The broader unemployment concept includes population groups on the fringes of economic activity—young people, women, and seniors—who have weaker connections to the labor market

The rest of the analysis covers only ILO-defined job-seekers who correspond to the international definition of unemployment.

For the sample as a whole, nearly as many men (11 percent) as women (12 percent) are unemployed. This average conceals some particularities: a

Table 1.7 Broader-Based Unemployment Rates in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Gender and Age

City	Gender		Age			All	
	Men	Women	10–29	30–49	50+	Percentage	Number
<i>West Africa</i>							
Abidjan	14.2	17.6	20.6	11.2	8.6	15.8	245,000
Bamako	9.2	16.5	17.8	8.5	7.2	12.5	53,000
Cotonou	7.1	6.5	8.6	5.1	5.8	6.8	25,000
Dakar	12.8	26.2	23.0	16.0	10.9	18.9	153,000
Lomé	12.6	9.8	13.9	8.1	10.5	11.2	47,000
Niamey	17.3	32.0	33.4	14.9	16.5	23.3	60,000
Ouagadougou	17.4	28.3	31.0	14.5	8.7	22.4	90,000
WAEMU countries	13.2	18.8	20.9	11.4	9.5	15.9	673,000
<i>Central Africa</i>							
Douala	12.0	21.2	21.4	10.8	13.4	16.0	138,000
Kinshasa	24.2	23.2	38.9	18.2	14.5	23.8	461,000
Yaoundé	12.4	24.8	24.8	12.4	6.2	17.9	131,000

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1–2–3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: Data on Antananarivo were not available.

higher proportion of women than men are unemployed in Dakar, whereas unemployment rates in Cotonou and Lomé are higher for men than women.

Across the board, the rate of unemployment falls with age. Young people in Ouagadougou are the hardest hit, with an unemployment rate of 22.4 percent among people 10–29. On the whole, young labor force participants find it extremely hard to enter the world of work.

Among older participants, Dakar and Abidjan stand out, with an unemployment rate of 10 percent for the intermediate age bracket (30–49). The oldest age bracket (50+) posts an unemployment rate of more than 11 percent in Niamey.

The unemployment rate also varies by level of education and type of training (table 1.8). Paradoxically, the unemployment rate rises with the level of education across all the West African cities. It is lowest among workers who never attended school, presumably because these workers are the least demanding regarding the jobs they will accept. In four West African cities, Central Africa, and Madagascar, the unemployment rates are bell shaped, falling only after secondary education. Even in these cities, however, unemployment rates among people who attended university are high, indicating that a degree is no guarantee of protection against unemployment (see chapter 5).

Heads of household (the households' main breadwinners) are the least affected by unemployment, with an average rate of 7 percent. "Secondary"

Table 1.8 ILO-Defined Unemployment Rates in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Level of Education (percent)

City	All	Uneducated	Primary	Lower-secondary	Upper-secondary	Secondary technical education	Higher education
<i>West Africa</i>							
Abidjan	13.5	8.7	11.4	18.1	19.2	23.3	20.7
Bamako	7.1	5.2	6.9	8.4	10.2	14.0	8.3
Cotonou	5.5	2.4	4.4	6.8	8.9	9.5	12.9
Dakar	11.7	8.9	12.3	15.2	14.6	0.4	12.7
Lomé	8.2	3.5	6.8	9.3	13.4	17.0	19.4
Niamey	13.1	9.1	15.0	21.5	14.1	15.0	8.5
Ouagadougou	15.4	9.5	16.0	23.9	22.7	25.8	14.3
WAEMU countries	11.4	7.6	10.5	15.3	16.1	18.0	16.6
<i>Central Africa</i>							
Douala	12.5	1.5	20.6	25.8	15.7	23.6	12.8
Kinshasa	14.9	7.8	11.8	16.5 ^a	16.5 ^a	16.5 ^a	15.6
Yaoundé	14.7	2.0	18.3	31.0	23.4	12.3	13.0
<i>Indian Ocean</i>							
Antananarivo	4.5	1.4	4.3	5.1	3.6	5.6	4.7

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: See text for ILO definition of unemployment.

a. Inaccuracies in the Kinshasa survey prevent the disaggregation of the unemployment rate at the secondary level.

members suffer the most from low labor demand, with unemployment averaging 17 percent for “other household members” and 21 percent for children of the head of household.

In all countries, unemployment is higher among natives (15 percent) than migrants (11 percent). This finding reflects not higher wage expectations but rather the fact that natives are more concentrated in the high unemployment risk categories (younger, more educated, and so forth).

Who Are the Unemployed?

Fifty-five percent of the unemployed are men (table 1.9). Men are the majority in all cities except Dakar, where women represent half of the unemployed, and the two Cameroonian cities (women represent 51 percent of the unemployed in Douala and 56 percent in Yaoundé). The average age of the unemployed is 30, but nearly one in four job-seekers (one in two in Ouagadougou) is 15–24. The average level of education of the unemployed is eight years of completed studies.

Table 1.9 Job-Seeker Characteristics in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa
(percentage of total, except where otherwise indicated)

Characteristic	West Africa							WAEMU countries	Central Africa			Indian Ocean
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou		Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
Men	51.3	56.2	53.3	49.2	64.2	57.7	54.8	53.1	49.3	65.8	44.3	58.7
Women	48.7	43.8	46.7	50.8	35.8	42.4	45.2	46.9	50.7	34.2	55.7	41.3
Average age (years)	28.3	28.7	30.3	29.9	29.6	30.0	26.7	28.7	29.7	33.0	27.9	26.6
Average education (years of completed schooling)	6.9	5.7	8.0	5.6	8.3	5.4	5.9	6.5	9.4	10.2	9.3	7.8
First-time job-seekers	54.0	57.8	40.0	53.8	50.8	61.1	63.2	54.9	39.0	60.9	45.6	42.7
Previously employed	46.0	42.2	60.0	46.2	49.2	38.9	36.8	45.1	61.0	39.1	54.4	58.3
Months of unemployment	36.9	33.3	32.3	46.9	32.1	59.5	48.6	40.7	36.7	66.7	33.0	16.0
Long-term unemployed	69.5	62.1	55.1	64.5	53.9	84.2	70.1	67.4	64.2	62.0	56.4	50.4
Number (thousands)	205.4	28.0	20.4	87.0	33.3	29.9	56.5	460.5 ^a	109.7	259.1	108.7	25.3

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: The long-term unemployed are people who have been looking for a job for more than one year.

a. Total population.

The unemployed are a heterogeneous population that includes two types of job-seekers: first-time job-seekers and previously employed workers. Fifty-three percent of the unemployed are first-time job-seekers, suggesting that the formal sector has adjusted to economic conditions mainly by freezing recruitment and only secondarily by cutting jobs.

Fifty-seven percent of unemployed women are first-time job-seekers. First-time job-seekers represent the majority of unemployed women in all cities; their share is particularly large in Ouagadougou, Niamey, and Kinshasa, where more than 70 percent of unemployed women are first-time job-seekers. First-time job-seekers have more years of education (8.7) than the previously employed (7.6 years), with an even wider gap in West Africa. They also have more years of education than employed women (6.9 years).

Unemployment among the previously employed reflects the weak economic situation in Sub-Saharan Africa: redundancies, contracts coming to an end, business closures, and staff cuts accounted for 57 percent of job losses. Nearly three in 10 job-seekers were made redundant or came to the end of their contract. One-third of job-seekers in Lomé were made redundant and one-quarter in Ouagadougou lost their job at the end of their contract. Abidjan suffered the most from the economic downturn (because of the political crisis), with more than 36 percent of job losses caused by closures and staff cuts.

The unemployment rate for the previously employed is higher among former public enterprise employees, where it affects more than 11 percent of workers (15 percent in Douala and 17 percent in Dakar). Privatization and restructuring have hit redundant employees hard, and a large number of them have not found new jobs.

Across institutional sectors and cities, unemployment hits the bottom of the wage ladder hardest. Whereas less than 6 percent of senior managers are unemployed, 13 percent of unskilled manual and nonmanual employees and 12 percent of laborers are unemployed.

Characteristics and Length of Unemployment

Unemployment averages nearly three and a half years (41 months) in West Africa, 35 months in Cameroon, and more than five years (66 months) in Kinshasa (these figures indicate the period during which the unemployed did not work a “real” job rather than the period during which they did not work at all). Nearly two-thirds of job-seekers have been unemployed for more than a year. On the whole, long-term unemployment hits first-time job-seekers harder than it hits the previously employed. The long average length of unemployment indicates how very hard it is for the unemployed to enter or reenter the labor market.

Two groups of cities can be distinguished. In the first group, made up of Cotonou, Lomé, Bamako, and especially Antananarivo, the labor market

appears to be more flexible than elsewhere. The unemployment rate is below 10 percent, and the length of unemployment is shorter than in other cities. The second group, made up of the cities in Central Africa, Dakar, Ouagadougou, and especially Niamey, unemployment rates are higher, and average unemployment lasts four to six years.

Job-Seeking Methods

The preferred job-seeking method among the unemployed is to draw on family solidarity networks. Two-thirds of the unemployed deploy this strategy. One in five job-seekers (55 percent in Antananarivo) directly prospects employers. About 4 percent of job-seekers (8 percent in Cotonou and Bamako and 13 percent in Antananarivo) respond to advertisements for jobs.

Only 7 percent of job-seekers are registered with an employment agency, and just 2 percent have actively tried to find a job through that agency. Registration rates are low because the majority of job-seekers (56 percent) are unaware that employment agencies exist. Another 28 percent are pessimistic about the agency's capacity to help them.

These findings suggest that the authorities need to do a better job of helping job-seekers, especially by providing them with information. Employment agencies should make it easier for job-seekers to look for jobs by matching job vacancies that come in from businesses with the profiles of potential applicants. Placement agencies may need to be restructured if they are to perform effectively.

Type of Job Sought

The majority (59 percent) of job-seekers are looking for a wage-earning job, especially in Central Africa and Madagascar (where this percentage stands at 75 percent). Nearly one-quarter (22 percent) would prefer to be self-employed (8 percent in Antananarivo), and one-fifth have no preference regarding the type of employment found. A large majority (70 percent) would like to find permanent, full-time employment with an average working week of 44 hours. Job-seekers are thus not a pool of manpower on the fringe of economic activity.

The reasons for preferring one type of employment over another are similar across cities. As might be expected, the majority of people seeking wage employment (58 percent) do so for the security it is supposed to provide in terms of employment and wages. Twenty-five percent of job-seekers are prepared to work in any kind of business, and 48 percent will accept any sector or occupation. Only 10 percent are drawn to public administration, which is not the end-all of a trepid workforce, to use an image that is all-too-often evoked. Unemployment therefore is not solely the upshot of dissatisfied manpower with ambitions that are incompatible with market conditions. At least in part, it also reflects the absence of job opportunities.

Earnings Expectations

One possible reason why people are unemployed is that their earnings expectations are unrealistic. Job-seekers in the seven West African cities expect to earn €162 for a 44-hour working week—about twice the average earnings of an employed worker (table 1.10). Only in Ouagadougou and Niamey are expectations closer to reality. Outside West Africa, job-seekers expect to earn €162 a month in Douala (where employed workers earn an average €99 a month), €138 in Yaoundé (where employed workers earn €111), and €67 in Antananarivo (where employed workers earn €58).

However, 75 percent of job-seekers are prepared to revise their earnings demands downward if they remain unemployed too long. The reservation earnings—that is, the minimum earnings a job-seeker would accept—is estimated at an average of €118 across the WAEMU region, about €100 in Cameroon, and €48 in Madagascar. These earnings are higher than average earnings in all cities except Antananarivo.

Table 1.10 Earnings Expectations and Reservation Earnings in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa

City	Monthly earnings expectations (euros)	Percentage prepared to revise earnings expectations if unemployment lasts too long	Monthly reservation earnings (euros)	Reservation earnings gap (euros)	Ideal working week (hours/week)
<i>West Africa</i>					
Abidjan	206	79.4	151	71.6***	44.5
Bamako	119	68.3	107	85.9***	41.4
Cotonou	115	81.9	90	61.6***	44.7
Dakar	174	78.6	126	85.9***	43.4
Lomé	105	82	71	87.8***	44.6
Niamey	86	77.4	67	80.4***	43.2
Ouagadougou	89	82.3	60	127.0***	45.8
WAEMU countries	162	79.1	118	n.a.	44.1
<i>Central Africa</i>					
Douala	162	86.6	109	53.7***	42.9
Kinshasa ^a	45	57.8	31	89.6***	41.9
Yaoundé	138	87.7	88	37.7***	45.6
<i>Indian Ocean</i>					
Antananarivo	67	86.3	48	2.1 ^{ns}	43.9

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: The reservation earnings gap corresponds to the percentage of additional earnings targeted by the unemployed (reservation earnings) compared with employed workers. It is calculated from a standard ordinary least squares Mincerian hourly gains equation based on gender, migrant status, status in the household, number of years of education and number of years of education squared, and potential experience.

a. More than half of the unemployed in Kinshasa did not answer the question.

*** significant at the 1 percent level; ns = not significant.

The explanation for disparities in job-seekers' reservation earnings needs to be developed using such parameters as work experience, skill level, gender, age, and type of employment sought. For example, for identical characteristics (gender, education, potential experience, and migrant status), the minimum wage for which job-seekers would be willing to work is more than 70 percent higher than the earnings of employed workers in their main job in the West African cities and about 40–50 percent higher than in Cameroon. This finding suggests that aspirations are out of line with actual labor market conditions. In Antananarivo, reservation earnings are not significantly different from actual earnings, which probably has something to do with the low unemployment rate. (Results are not reliable for Kinshasa, where more than half of the unemployed did not answer the question about earnings expectations.)

Job Structure and Dynamics

Forty-four percent of the 7 million people employed in the 11 cities studied were women (table 1.11). Women are very much in the minority in Niamey (36 percent of jobholders); in Cotonou and Lomé, they form the majority. Except in Dakar, Kinshasa, and Antananarivo, migrants form the majority of the employed labor force. Average job seniority is seven years. It is higher in Niamey, Bamako, Dakar, and Kinshasa, partly because of a slightly higher average age in these cities.

For the sample as a whole, the rate of wage employment (wage workers as a percentage of all workers), an indicator of the extent of the formalization of labor relations, is 39 percent (35 percent in West Africa). The highest rates of wage employment are in Antananarivo and Cameroon (slightly more than half of all workers) and in Abidjan (41 percent) and Dakar (38 percent), the two most prosperous cities in West Africa.

Multiple jobholding is often considered to be a household and individual strategy for increasing income and offsetting declines in income during recessions. The rate of multiple jobholding is 8 percent for the sample as a whole. In West Africa, the lowest rate of multiple jobholding (less than 5 percent) is in the two largest cities (Dakar and Abidjan). In contrast, 9 percent of workers in Cotonou hold a second job. The highest rate of multiple jobholding is in Antananarivo (14 percent). These figures belie the notion that multiple jobholding is the norm in Africa.

Nearly half of all workers (49 percent) head up their own production unit, either as an employer with Wage-earners or as an own-account worker. The cities in West Africa can be classed into three groups. In Bamako, Lomé, and Cotonou, about 60 percent of workers are self-employed; in Ouagadougou and Niamey, just under 50 percent are self-employed; in Abidjan and Dakar, 45 percent of workers are self-employed. The situation is more disparate in Central Africa and Madagascar, where the proportion is 36 percent in Antananarivo,

Table 1.11 Worker Characteristics in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa

Characteristic	West Africa							Central Africa			Indian Ocean	
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou	WAEMU countries	Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
Number of jobs (thousands)	1,312	369	348	658	371	197	311	3,566 ^a	760	1,477	630	540
Men (percent)	53.3	55.9	46.6	59.2	47.1	63.6	58.1	54.4	59.3	55.1	59.5	59.3
Women (percent)	46.7	44.1	53.4	40.8	52.9	36.4	41.9	45.6	40.7	44.9	40.5	40.7
Migrants (percent)	73.3	59.2	56.0	42.7	66.5	61.3	60.5	62.2	75.2	45.3	77.0	28.9
Average age (years)	31.4	33.4	32.7	32.8	31.5	34.2	32.8	32.3	33.4	39.4	33.0	33.4
Education (years)	5.0	4.1	5.4	4.6	5.9	4.7	4.3	4.9	8.8	9.2	9.3	8.8
Seniority (years)	5.4	7.3	6.6	7.4	5.9	8.2	6.0	6.3	4.9	8.1	4.3	4.9
<i>Type of worker (percentage of total)</i>												
Self-employed	44.7	62.5	57.1	44.4	60.2	47.2	49.5	49.9	41.6	60.3	38.2	35.6
Manager	9.0	10.8	8.3	6.7	4.5	13.8	9.1	8.5	9.8	14.9	17.0	8.3
Manual or nonmanual employee	17.3	9.8	11.3	17.9	12.3	11.9	12.8	14.8	25.0	16.0	23.6	32.5
Laborer or similar	29.0	16.9	23.3	31.0	23.0	27.1	28.6	26.8	29.5	8.8	29.2	23.6
Wage employment (percent)	40.8	28.0	24.7	37.5	24.0	35.0	33.0	34.6	46.5	35.7	51.0	53.2
Multiple jobholding (percent)	4.9	7.2	9.2	4.3	6.1	7.7	6.2	5.9	14.0	6.5	11.6	14.0

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

a. Total number of jobs (thousands).

38 percent in Yaoundé, 42 percent in Douala, and 60 percent in Kinshasa. Skilled manual and nonmanual employees account for just over 18 percent of jobs, largely reflecting the development of wage employment. These figures range from an average of 15 percent in West Africa and Kinshasa to about one-quarter in Cameroon and one-third in Madagascar.

The job structure by sector reveals the predominance of trade and services (the “tertiary” sector). This sector accounts for at least three-quarters of all jobs, except in Antananarivo (60 percent) (table 1.12). Industrial activities account for a little more than one-fifth of jobs. Their weight is heaviest in Dakar (28 percent), Niamey (26 percent), and Antananarivo (35 percent), where a buoyant export processing business sector exists, especially in textiles. Suburban agriculture remains marginal (3 percent), with a maximum of 5 percent in Kinshasa, Niamey, Antananarivo, and Ouagadougou.

The distribution of jobs by institutional sector is a good composite indicator of the structure of the labor market. The largest sector is the informal sector, which employs 70 percent of workers on average and up to 76 percent in West Africa. The formal private sector is in second place, with 17 percent of jobs. Only 11 percent of employed people work in the public sector (8 percent in the administration and 3 percent in public and semipublic enterprises). The very small share of public employment invalidates the idea of a bloated public sector.

The structure by institutional sector reveals some remarkable similarities across cities. In West Africa, Abidjan has the most developed formal private sector (about 18 percent of jobs). Dakar is in second place with 15 percent. Niamey posts the largest concentration of public sector jobs, but they account for just 15 percent of total employment. Cotonou and Lomé are leading cities for the informal sector, which accounts for more than 80 percent of jobs.

Even sharper contrasts are found in Central Africa and Madagascar. At one end of the scale is Kinshasa, where 71 percent of jobs are in the informal sector, the public sectors employs 17 percent of the workforce, and the formal private sector employs just 9 percent of the workforce (the smallest share of the 11 cities). At the other end of the scale are the Cameroonian and Malagasy cities, where a smaller (albeit still high) share (53–62 percent) of jobs are in the informal sector.

Public Sector

Public jobs are naturally concentrated in the nonmarket sectors. However, industrial employment accounts for 25 percent of jobs in semi-public enterprises, a slightly higher share than in the labor market as a whole (21 percent). Women are less well represented in public employment (26 percent) than in the labor market as a whole (45 percent). In all cities, the highest proportion of migrants (70 percent) is found in the public sector (table 1.13).

Table 1.12 Job Structure in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Institutional and Activity Sector
(percent)

Sector/industry	West Africa							Central Africa			Indian Ocean	
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou	WAEMU countries	Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
<i>Institutional sector</i>												
Public administration	5.5	7.5	6.3	5.7	5.2	13.5	10.4	6.6	4.8	11.9	15.0	8.1
Public enterprise	1.1	2.5	2.2	1.8	2.3	1.8	2.3	1.8	1.8	5.0	2.3	2.6
Formal private sector	17.6	11.4	9.9	15.0	10.5	11.8	11.8	14.2	30.7	8.8	23.8	34.6
Informal sector	74.7	77.5	80.3	76.4	81.0	71.1	73.4	76.2	61.9	70.9	57.2	53.1
Nonprofit organization	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.0	1.8	2.1	1.2	0.8	3.4	1.7	1.5
<i>Industry</i>												
Primary sector ^a	1.6	2.6	2.1	3.1	2.1	5.4	4.9	2.6	2.7	5.8	2.5	5.0
Industry	19.7	20.0	18.0	28.2	20.5	26.2	23.2	21.9	22.5	14.8	18.8	34.9
Trade	34.1	41.7	37.0	26.6	38.4	26.3	36.4	34.0	27.2	42.3	20.9	23.2
Services	44.6	35.5	42.9	42.1	39.0	42.1	35.5	41.5	47.6	37.1	57.8	36.9

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

a. The primary sector includes agriculture, forestry, and fishery.

Table 1.13 Job Structure in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Institutional Sector
(percent, except where otherwise indicated)

Institutional sector	Number	Share of total	Average age (years)	Proportion of women	Proportion of migrants	Completed years of education	Seniority in the job (years)	Proportion of informal employment
Public administration	588,300	8.4	41.7	27.3	69.5	12.3	10.0	8.0
Public enterprise	178,600	2.6	44.0	21.9	72.0	11.4	10.9	11.2
Formal private sector	1,216,700	17.4	34.4	25.8	61.5	9.3	5.3	40.7
Informal sector	4,877,700	69.9	32.8	52.6	58.3	5.4	6.1	97.0
Nonprofit organization	120,200	1.7	36.9	28.8	61.1	9.7	6.6	37.0
All	6,981,500	100	34.2	44.6	60.2	6.9	6.4	76.5

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Public sector employees are more skilled than the rest of the labor force. Employees in this sector have by far the highest level of education (12 completed years of education). Public sector employees have more than 10 years seniority on average, compared with just 6 in the other sectors. The longer tenure reflects the job-for-life phenomenon as well as the freeze on recruitment.

Formal Private Sector

The formal private sector has the highest rate of wage employment (86 percent across all the cities) after the public sector. Thirty-five percent of employed workers in the sector work in businesses with fewer than 10 people (21 percent work in businesses with fewer than 6 people); 26 percent work in businesses with more than 100 people. In Bamako, Ouagadougou, Lomé, Niamey, Cotonou, and Yaoundé the majority of formal private sector jobs are in establishments that employ a maximum of 20 people.

The average age (34) is much lower than in the public sector (42). Formal private sector employees have an average of 9.3 years of education, second only to workers in the public sector.

Informal Sector

The informal sector is similar in all cities in terms of age (young), activities, the size of the production unit (small), and rates of wage employment (low). Ninety percent of informal sector jobs are in production units with fewer than six people, and 54 percent are own-account workers. This sector has the lowest wage employment rate of all institutional sectors (17 percent).

Three-quarters of informal sector jobs are in trade and services. Trade accounts for half of all informal sector jobs in Bamako, one-third in Niamey and Dakar, and 56 percent in Kinshasa. However, the industrial sector is not inconsequential; it provides 21 percent of informal sector jobs (25–32 percent in Dakar, Niamey, and Ouagadougou). Sixty-eight percent of industrial jobs (70 percent in WAEMU) are informal. Only in Antananarivo is the formal sector developed enough to provide more than half (54 percent) of industrial jobs.

Across the 11 cities, about 20 percent of informal sector workers work on proper professional premises (more than 25 percent in Abidjan and Dakar, 20 percent in Antananarivo, 9 percent in Niamey). Fourteen percent of informal sector workers work from home without dedicated facilities (20 percent in Kinshasa, 18 percent in Niamey, and 17 percent in Cotonou); 6 percent of informal sector workers work from home in a space specifically set aside for the purpose (13 percent in Antananarivo and 10 percent in Cotonou). Across the 11 cities, 11 percent of workers are itinerant. These percentages are higher in Lomé, Cotonou, and Bamako. Workers in the informal sector are young, with one-third of them under 25. With an average 5.4 years of education, more than

60 percent of informal workers have no more than primary school education (77 percent in the WAEMU countries).

The informal sector is also disproportionately female (53 percent). The percentage of women ranges from 41 percent in Niamey to 60 percent in Cotonou and Lomé. Contrary to a widely held belief that migration is responsible for the development of the informal sector, the sector actually contains the lowest proportion of migrants (about 50 percent).

Informal Employment

The ILO (2003) defines informal employment as employment that does not provide coverage in the institutional social protection scheme. Workers in this sector include the vast majority of the informal labor force and unprotected employees in the formal sector (Herrera and others 2012). We define informal employment as all contributing family workers, all independent workers in the informal sector, and all employees without written contracts and not benefiting from social protection.

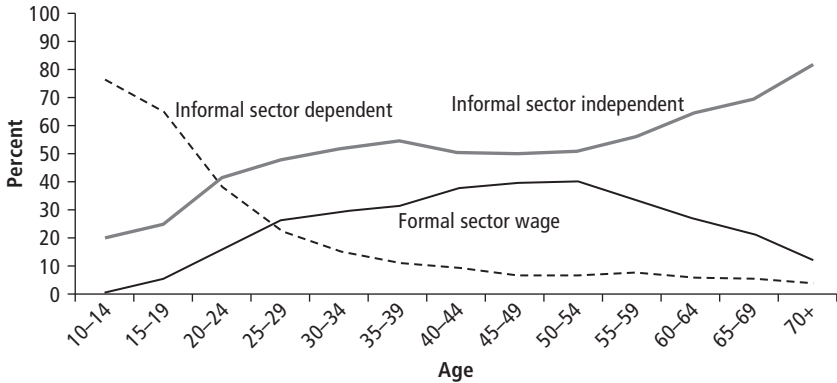
Two main conclusions can be drawn from table 1.13 and the detailed results by country (not reported to save space). First, informal employment is dominant: on average, 77 percent of the labor force is informally employed. The largest shares are in Lomé (83 percent), Cotonou and Bamako (82 percent), and Ouagadougou (81 percent); the smallest share is in Antananarivo (62 percent).

Second, informal employment is significant in every institutional sector. As expected, nearly all informal sector jobs (97 percent) are informal. But informal employment represents 41 percent of private formal sector jobs (26 percent in Antananarivo, 33 percent in Abidjan and Dakar, and 36 percent in Kinshasa). Cameroonian cities have both the highest proportion of formal sector jobs and the highest rate of informal jobs in the formal sector (50 percent in Douala and 58 percent in Yaoundé). Informal employment also accounts for 8 percent of public administration jobs and 11 percent of public enterprise jobs.

Composition of Working Labor Force by Age Bracket

Three main groups account for virtually the entire working labor force studied: self-employment in the informal sector (in the form of own-account work or work as an employer) (48 percent); wage employment in the public and private formal sector (27 percent); and dependent employment in the informal sector as an employee, apprentice, or contributing family worker (22 percent) (figure 1.2). The remaining 3 percent are nonwage workers in the formal sector.

Up to the age of about 20, the majority of employed workers work in the informal sector (96 percent among people 10–14, 90 percent among people 15–19, and 80 percent among people 20–24), mainly in dependent employment. The second period sees the emergence of wage employment in the formal sector as a labor market integration mode. This curve rises steadily through age 55.

Figure 1.2 Sectoral Composition of Employed Workforce in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Age

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

After 55, individuals return to informal sector jobs as self-employed workers. Up to 80 percent of jobs held after age 69 are in self-employment.

It is tempting to interpret this age-based curve in terms of the professional life cycle: workers first acquire informal sector work experience, then integrate into the formal sector as wage earners before setting up in self-employment at the end of the working life with human and financial capital accumulated in the previous stage. In fact, only panel data on the entire life cycle or backward-looking surveys (biographical-type surveys) could bear out this three-phase trajectory at the individual level.

Labor Income and Working Conditions

Labor provides most of the income received by African individuals and households. Analyzing this indicator therefore evaluates the quality of the jobs generated by the different productive sectors and measures the standard of living and extent of poverty in the 11 cities studied. The analysis at this stage concentrates on nominal incomes (further analysis converts these data into real incomes using purchasing power parity). As with all household surveys, capturing incomes is an extremely tricky business (see overview). The following findings should therefore be interpreted with caution. In particular, more attention should be paid to within-city than between-city differences and to the aggregates for the region.

Earnings in Main Job

The average monthly earned income across all 11 cities is estimated at €72 (including contributing family workers' zero earnings). This average conceals large disparities (table 1.14). Average earnings in West Africa are €83. The highest earnings are in Abidjan (€108) and Dakar (€89). By far the lowest earnings are in Lomé (€39). The situation elsewhere ranges from barely €20 in Kinshasa to €52 in Antananarivo and more than €100 in Cameroon.

Public sector workers are better paid than workers in the private sector. An employee in a public enterprise earns €163 and a civil servant in the administration €208, whereas an employee in a formal private business earns just €116 a month. The lowest income is in the informal sector, where monthly earnings average just €52.

The higher earnings of public sector employees partly reflect the characteristics of the manpower employed in the sector, where senior and middle managers account for 59 percent of jobs (as opposed to 20 percent in the formal private sector). The percentage of managers in the public sector ranges from 37 percent in Lomé to 69 percent in Abidjan and 72 percent in Bamako.

Average seniority is also higher in the public sector (10 years versus about 6 in the formal private sector) (table 1.15). Average tenure in the public sector is shorter in Douala (eight years), Ouagadougou (seven years), and Yaoundé (five years).

Distribution of Earnings

Average monthly earnings vary by industry (table 1.16). Civil servants are at the top of the ladder. Civil servants in Dakar earn 10 times more than “small street traders”; civil servants in Cotonou earn 6.8 times more than workers in “clothing.” The smallest gap is in Bamako, where civil servants earn 3.8 times more than “small street traders.” In general, small traders are paid the least.

The minimum monthly wage ranges from €9 in Kinshasa to €59 in Dakar (table 1.17). Even within WAEMU, the range is wide (€21 in Lomé to €59 in Dakar). About half of workers earn less than the minimum wage in West Africa, ranging from 44 percent in Bamako to 61 percent in Ouagadougou. The proportion is lower elsewhere (about 40 percent in Antananarivo and Kinshasa and 30 percent in Cameroon). This finding reveals clear shortcomings in compliance with the legislation in force. The percentage of workers earning less than the minimum wage is highest in the informal sector. At the other end of the scale, about 10 percent of workers are paid more than four times the minimum wage in all cities except Yaoundé and Douala, where the minimum wage has not been adjusted for many years and the share of workers earning more than four times the minimum wage stands at about 20 percent. All in all, the minimum wage does not seem to be a binding constraint in any institutional sector. The *African Economic Outlook 2012* (African Development Bank and others 2012) confirms this result, concluding that “minimum wage is not an issue.”

Table 1.14 Average Monthly Earnings from Main Job in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Institutional Sector
(euros)

Sector	West Africa							Central Africa			Indian Ocean	
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou	WAEMU countries	Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
Public administration	337	136	137	228	126	137	144	212	198	18	235	99
Public enterprise	390	214	186	205	106	171	153	226	340	52	400	107
Formal private sector ^a	219	141	100	169	73	121	112	170	149	34	117	59
Informal sector	60	57	40	59	27	44	31	50	58	17	64	38
All	108	77	56	89	39	69	57	83	99	21	111	52

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: Figures include contributing family workers, whether or not they were paid.

a. Includes formal private businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Table 1.15 Average Seniority in Main Job in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Institutional Sector
(years)

Sector	West Africa							Central Africa			Indian Ocean	
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou	WAEMU countries	Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
Public administration	9.8	10.8	9.3	13.3	11.5	10.1	6.9	10.2	8.1	11.4	5.3	10.6
Public enterprise	9.8	11.2	8.4	10.7	10.1	12.7	8.8	10.1	9.0	13.1	7.2	8.2
Formal private sector ^a	5.5	6.7	5.5	7.8	5.9	6.9	5.4	6.1	4.6	6.9	3.3	5.0
Informal sector	5.0	6.9	6.4	6.7	5.5	7.9	5.9	5.9	4.8	7.4	4.4	7.0
All	5.4	7.3	6.6	7.4	5.9	8.2	6.0	6.3	4.9	8.1	4.3	6.6

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: Figures include contributing family workers, whether or not they were paid.

a. Includes formal private businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Table 1.16 Average Monthly Earnings from Main Job in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Industry
(euros)

Sector	West Africa							Central Africa			Indian Ocean	
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou	WAEMU countries	Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
Primary sector ^a	123	87	79	97	30	48	40	79	80	15	42	24
Industry	102	82	46	73	32	47	48	73	120	23	92	49
Trade	63	59	46	70	28	53	32	54	63	18	64	47
Services	145	96	69	110	54	97	90	111	110	23	137	63
All	108	78	56	89	39	69	57	83	99	21	111	52

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: Figures include contributing family workers, whether or not they were paid.

a. The primary sector includes agriculture, forestry, and fishery.

Table 1.17 Monthly Earnings as Multiple of Minimum Wage in Main Job in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa

Item	West Africa							Central Africa			Indian Ocean	
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Ouagadougou	Niamey	WAEMU countries	Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
Minimum wage (euros)	55	34	38	59	21	41	34	–	36	9	36	29
Less than the minimum wage (percent)	49.9	43.9	54.9	53.6	49.0	61.3	45.3	51.1	31.1	41.0	29.1	40.1
More than four times the minimum wage (percent)	10.6	12.5	9.0	7.4	10.3	9.1	13.1	10.0	17.8	11.7	22.3	8.1

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: Figures include contributing family workers, whether or not they were paid.

The distribution of earned income can also be analyzed by comparing quartiles and the interquartile ratio (table 1.18). Median monthly earnings are much lower than average earnings, partly because of the large number of unpaid workers. When unpaid workers are excluded, the gap between median and average earnings narrows, although median earnings still remain much lower. On average, workers in the third quartile of the distribution earn five times more than workers in the first quartile. This ratio is highest in Bamako and Niamey (about 6) and lowest in Cotonou and Dakar (about 4). The gaps are wider in West Africa than in Central Africa and Madagascar.

Taking into account people who work without being paid (zero earnings), especially contributing family workers, the Gini coefficients are similar across cities (table 1.19). In West Africa, they range from 0.59 in Dakar to 0.64 in Ouagadougou. Antananarivo stands out, with a lower albeit still fairly high level of inequality of 0.53. This finding reflects the higher rate of wage employment in Antananarivo, especially in the formal sector.

With no effective labor market regulatory mechanisms, earnings inequalities are very high in all cities. Gini indexes at the household level are of the same order of magnitude, suggesting that no compensating mechanisms are at work within households to mitigate individual inequalities.

Gender Differences

On average, women's earnings are half of men's (table 1.20). Women are even worse off when their incomes are viewed in terms of median earnings: their median remuneration is about one-third of men's. This gap reflects the weight of contributing family workers, who are overwhelmingly female.

These findings are similar across cities, although the ranking depends on the indicator used. Based on average remuneration, comparisons show women to be best off in Central Africa and Madagascar (where the male/female ratio is about 1.6), Dakar (1.87), and Niamey (1.94). They are worst off in Cotonou (2.51) and Bamako (2.59) (see chapter 9).

The second gender-related characteristic of earned income is the higher inequality among women than among men. One of the reasons for this difference is the weight of informal sector jobs, which are less egalitarian than jobs in other sectors. Ouagadougou has both the largest within-gender earnings inequalities and the widest gender gap.

Earnings Ladder

The earnings ladder is evident across all institutional sectors (table 1.21). Managers and employers earn the most. They are better paid in the formal private sector than in the public sector, except in Lomé and Cotonou. Next come manual and nonmanual employees, with laborers and others (apprentices and family workers) earning least.

Table 1.18 Monthly Earnings from Main Job in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Quartile
(euros)

Item	West Africa							Central Africa			Indian Ocean	
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou	WAEMU countries	Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
First quartile	23	15	14	22	9	14	11	15	24	3	30	17
Second quartile	55	46	31	46	23	45	23	38	53	10	55	42
Third quartile	112	92	61	92	46	88	61	92	100	19	122	68
Average monthly earnings	108	78	56	89	39	69	57	83	99	21	111	52
Interquartile ratio (third quartile/first quartile)	4.9	6.0	4.4	4.1	5.2	6.1	5.6	6.0	4.2	5.4	4.0	4.0

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: Figures include contributing family workers, whether or not they were paid.

Table 1.19 Gini Index of Monthly Earnings and Household Income in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa

Type of earnings	West Africa							Central Africa			Indian Ocean
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou	Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
Individual earnings from main job, including zero earnings	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.59	0.61	0.61	0.64	0.58	0.62	0.58	0.53
Individual earnings from main job, excluding zero earnings	0.58	0.60	0.54	0.54	0.56	0.56	0.59	0.53	0.59	0.53	0.47
Household labor earnings	0.58	0.58	0.55	0.54	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.55	0.64	0.61	0.47
Total household income	0.59	0.58	0.53	0.51	0.62	0.59	0.56	0.51	0.62	0.55	0.46

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Table 1.20 Average and Median Monthly Earnings from Main Job and Gini Index in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Gender

Item	West Africa							WAEMU countries	Central Africa			Indian Ocean
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou		Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
<i>Average earnings (euros)</i>												
Men	147	106	83	110	55	84	73	111	122	25	132	64
Women	64	41	33	59	25	43	35	49	65	16	81	39
<i>Median earnings (euros)</i>												
Men	83	57	50	79	31	48	46	67	75	15	76	42
Women	29	18	18	28	12	18	13	23	38	7	46	25
<i>Gini coefficient</i>												
Men	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.57	0.58	0.59	0.54	0.60	0.55	0.50
Women	0.63	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.60	0.63	0.67	0.63	0.60	0.63	0.60	0.54
All	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.59	0.61	0.61	0.64	0.63	0.58	0.62	0.58	0.53

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: Figures include contributing family workers, whether or not they were paid.

Table 1.21 Average Monthly Earnings from Main Job in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Institutional Sector and Socioeconomic Group (euros)

Sector	West Africa							WAEMU countries	Central Africa			Indian Ocean
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou		Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
<i>Public sector</i>												
Managers	417	182	190	308	177	185	206	281	315	37	311	153
Manual and nonmanual employees	200	96	98	151	80	84	101	131	157	15	152	77
Laborers and others	112	54	39	88	47	48	47	64	73	14	56	45
<i>Formal private sector^a</i>												
Managers and employers	484	240	149	364	170	248	263	351	370	48	280	152
Manual and nonmanual employees	140	80	76	134	62	74	84	118	108	23	83	50
Laborers and others	84	42	27	61	20	32	30	59	67	20	49	28
<i>Informal sector</i>												
Managers and employers	128	117	87	169	52	156	90	115	155	25	215	94
Own-account	63	61	49	76	30	50	35	56	57	15	64	43
Manual and nonmanual employees	83	60	45	68	34	62	44	69	63	16	55	38
Laborers and others	24	17	6	19	9	14	13	18	23	8	20	9
All	108	78	56	89	39	69	57	83	99	21	111	52

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: Figures include contributing family workers, whether or not they were paid.

a. Includes formal private businesses and nonprofit organizations.

In the formal sector, internal heterogeneity is greater in the private sector than in the public sector: formal private sector managers earn two to three times more than manual and nonmanual employees. The ratio between managers and laborers ranges from 6 (in Abidjan, Bamako, Cotonou, and Dakar) to more than 8 (in Lomé, Niamey, and Ouagadougou). There is less wage inequality in the public sector, where managers earn no more than twice the wages of manual and nonmanual employees and up to four times more than laborers. On average, the formal private sector pays its managers relatively more and the public sector pays its low-skilled employees relatively more.

The informal sector is the worst-paid sector, both because of the predominance of the least skilled categories of workers and because workers in the informal sector earn less than their counterparts in other sectors (see chapter 5). Own-account workers in the informal sector generally earn less than half the wages of manual and nonmanual employees in the formal sector. However, except in Ouagadougou, they earn more than the monthly minimum wage in all cities.

Working Hours and Underemployment

The average work week is 48 hours for formal private sector workers, 44 hours for workers in public enterprises, and 42 hours in public administration (table 1.22). Informal sector workers also work long hours (more than 47 hours a week). This sector is thus not a source of marginal, part-time jobs; it leaves little time to work a second job. The longest weekly hours are in Lomé and Ouagadougou (about 50 hours a week). The average work week is 45 hours in Dakar and 43 in Antananarivo.

Differences in the work week are very wide in the cities studied: one in five workers works less than 35 hours a week and 41 percent work more than 48 hours. The formal sector (public and private) is the most compliant with legislation on work duration: 70 percent of workers in the sector work 35–48 hours a week. In contrast, just 30 percent of informal sector workers work these hours. The work week is much longer in the informal sector, where 46 percent of workers work more than 48 hours a week (the figure is 29 percent in the formal sector).

Time-related underemployment. The number of hours worked reveals the amount of time-related underemployment. Fifteen percent of employed workers—more than 1 million people—involuntarily work less than 35 hours a week (table 1.23). The rate of time-related underemployment varies across cities (10 percent in Ouagadougou and Yaoundé, 17 percent in Bamako and Lomé, and 20 percent in Kinshasa). It is highest in the informal sector (16 percent).

Invisible underemployment. Time-related underemployment is just one manifestation of underemployment. For example, excessively long working hours

Table 1.22 Average Weekly Hours Worked in Main Job in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Institutional Sector

Sector	West Africa							WAEMU countries	Central Africa			Indian Ocean
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou		Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
Public administration	43.2	40.8	41.0	41.5	49.9	43.2	41.4	42.7	39.9	42.6	38.0	40.3
Public enterprise	43.5	45.9	44.0	42.7	45.3	43.8	46.6	44.4	41.8	44.7	41.7	43.0
Formal private sector ^a	46.3	50.2	48.0	44.2	51.2	49.7	50.8	47.2	50.0	47.5	50.6	47.7
Informal sector	48.7	45.3	46.8	46.0	49.6	48.0	52.2	48.0	44.3	46.7	49.9	40.9
All	47.9	45.6	46.5	45.4	49.7	47.5	50.7	47.5	45.9	46.2	48.1	43.3

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

a. Includes formal private businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Table 1.23 Forms of Underemployment in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa
(percent)

Form of underemployment	West Africa							WAEMU countries	Central Africa			Indian Ocean
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou		Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
Time-related underemployment rate	12.6	17.1	13.4	16.2	17.1	16.0	10.6	14.3	14.4	19.6	9.9	14.0
Invisible underemployment rate (percentage of employed workers earning less than minimum hourly wage)	53.2	45.4	61.1	57.8	55.8	51.1	66.5	55.2	37.1	40.8	38.4	40.9
Total underemployment rate	66.4	58.8	69.2	69.4	68.4	64.4	73.0	67.1	53.7	63.0	53.7	52.7
<i>Not in employment, education, or training (NEET) rate among people 10–24</i>												
All	22.2	21.8	11.3	30.5	11.1	34.3	22.9	22.9	14.1	21.5	14.2	9.8
Women	28.4	28.8	15.0	39.6	14.5	40.3	30.3	29.5	19.3	24.9	18.5	11.6
Men	14.0	14.2	7.2	20.4	7.1	27.1	14.9	15.3	8.6	17.7	9.5	8.1

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: Time-related and invisible underemployment are based on all employed workers. Total underemployment is based on all workers (employed and unemployed).

can (paradoxically) be a sign of underemployment when they are made necessary by abnormally low labor productivity. This form of underemployment is called *invisible underemployment*.

We have chosen the percentage of employed workers earning less than the minimum hourly wage as our indicator of invisible underemployment. On this basis, we estimate the rate of invisible underemployment at 48 percent across all 11 cities. It is highest in Ouagadougou (66.5 percent). Even in Bamako, it stands at more than 45 percent. Outside West Africa, the rate of invisible underemployment is lower, albeit still high, at about 40 percent.

Intercity comparisons need to be interpreted in relative terms, because the purchasing power of the minimum wage in force is not necessarily the same across cities, and wage policies do not necessarily pursue the same objective. The minimum wage should therefore be seen more as a social standard associated with a national environment than as a universal and absolute benchmark (physiological minimum for subsistence, for example). This manifestation of the mismatch between labor supply and demand is most glaring in the informal sector, where 60 percent of workers are in a situation of invisible underemployment (two-thirds in WAEMU); this share is much lower among formal private sector workers (28 percent), civil servants (14 percent), and public enterprise employees (8 percent).

Another indicator of underemployment is the NEET (not in employment, education, or training) rate, which takes into account discouraged workers. Among people 10–24, the NEET rate is 23 percent in West Africa (31 percent in Dakar and 34 percent in Niamey), 22 percent in Kinshasa, 14 percent in Cameroon, and 10 percent in Madagascar (see table 1.23). The NEET rate for young women is twice as high as for young men, except in Niamey, Kinshasa, and particularly Antananarivo, where both the levels and the gap (3.5 percentage points) are lowest.

When the different components of underemployment (unemployment, time-related underemployment, and invisible underemployment) are aggregated to obtain a composite indicator of underemployment, the total underemployment rate is 62 percent—5 million out of nearly 8 million workers—across all 11 cities. Total underemployment affects almost 60 percent of workers in Bamako and almost 75 percent in Ouagadougou. Women are more affected than men, whatever the type of underemployment (19 percent for women and 12 percent for men for visible underemployment; 61 percent for women and 38 percent for men for invisible underemployment). Underemployment of the labor force therefore seems to be the main problem in the labor market and, more generally, the region's urban economy (see chapter 2).

Working Conditions and Dependent Workers' Benefits

Job quality is conditioned by more than just earnings and working hours. Other factors, such as the steadiness of the job, the provision of an employment contract, the existence of social security coverage and paid holidays, and

promotion opportunities and in-house training, are also important. This subsection focuses on dependent workers (employees, contributing family workers, and apprentices), because independent workers are not covered by labor legislations.

Nearly 9 in 10 jobs are permanent across all 11 cities. Niamey leads in the share of casual jobs (19 percent of all jobs). In the informal sector, 85 percent of jobs are permanent jobs. Therefore, job insecurity does not manifest itself in a string of “odd jobs” and short-term jobs.

Job insecurity is expressed in the low level of employment contracts. Nearly two-thirds of employees have no written contract with their employer, and an equivalent proportion do not receive a payslip (table 1.24). Labor relations vary a great deal by institutional sector. In the informal sector, just 9 percent of dependent workers have a written contract, and less than 3 percent receive payslips.

Another indicator of poor job quality is the small share of workers with welfare benefits: 9.1 percent of workers are affiliated with the official social security body, and 3.3 percent have health insurance provided by the business. Differences are evident across institutional sectors. One-third of public sector employees have social security coverage, and 47 percent are entitled to paid holidays. These figures are much higher than in the formal private sector, where 12 percent of employees have social security coverage and 28 percent are entitled to paid holidays. Dependent workers in the informal sector appear to be totally deprived of these benefits. The gap between the two sectors is widened by the fact that the majority of informal workers are self-employed. Welfare and other benefits (allowances, job security, and so forth) are more common among the highest-paid socioeconomic groups, accentuating the differences in job quality (see chapter 4).

Union membership remains low among dependent workers. It stands at 13 percent in West Africa (ranging from 7 percent in Cotonou to 17 percent in Niamey). It is 15 percent in Kinshasa and less than 10 percent in Cameroon and Antananarivo. Unions are more widespread in the public sector: about one-third of public employees are union members as opposed to from one-tenth (Central Africa) to one-fifth (West Africa) in the formal private sector and less than 2 percent in the informal sector.

Job Mobility and Prospects

Data from Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys can be used to quantify the quality of the match between the jobs people hold and the jobs they aspire to hold. The nature of the mismatches captures potential labor market rigidities, which can affect labor force participation rates, unemployment, and remuneration.

Table 1.24 Working Conditions for Dependent Workers in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa
(percent)

Feature	West Africa							WAEMU countries	Central Africa			Indian Ocean
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou		Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
Permanent job	92.0	82.6	92.5	84.6	84.7	81.4	87.0	88.2	86.9	87.8	91.8	90.8
Payslip	31.4	39.9	31.5	32.8	25.0	36.1	32.3	32.2	33.8	52.1	37.6	53.8
Contract	34.6	38.3	36.7	32.9	37.0	37.9	33.5	35.0	36.2	65.2	42.6	54.5
Social security	6.5	18.7	7.8	7.7	7.0	15.2	14.9	9.1	8.4	5.8	6.0	44.3
Health insurance	2.9	2.5	3.6	3.7	1.6	5.0	4.6	3.3	4.1	5.2	5.1	41.8
Paid holidays	19.3	22.8	16.1	7.9	11.0	13.1	23.2	16.3	11.7	7.3	17.2	44.7
In-house training	11.9	15.6	11.3	11.1	16.3	21.0	20.4	13.6	22.2	31.0	17.0	17.4
In-house promotion	9.1	3.5	5.7	11.1	13.8	15.5	18.0	10.4	12.1	22.0	13.7	7.2
Union members	15.5	15.0	7.2	10.0	13.2	16.6	7.9	12.8	9.6	14.8	6.9	8.1

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

The analysis in this section covers only people 15–24, because this generation constitutes the vast majority of people entering the labor market currently or in the near future. Some 4.6 million people 15–24 live in the 11 cities studied: 2.7 million are inactive, 1.5 million have jobs, and 341,000 (18 percent) are unemployed. Among jobholders, 38 percent report being satisfied with the position they hold and do not intend to look for another job in the near future. Fifty-two percent would like to find a new job, either by changing establishment (41 percent) or by being promoted within their current establishment.

The high level of job dissatisfaction decreases with age, falling to 44 percent among people 30–39 and 14 percent among people 60 and older. This phenomenon stems from two factors. The first is the “normal” life-cycle effect, in which work experience and seniority enable young people to secure better-quality jobs. The second is the fact that the depressed labor market is preventing young people from entering jobs that correspond to their skills (see chapter 3).

Young civil servants are more inclined to want to keep their jobs (59 percent) than young people working in the informal sector (37 percent). Surprisingly, this difference virtually disappears in West Africa, where 34 percent of young civil servants and 35 percent of young people in the informal sector are dissatisfied. However, among people who want to change jobs, proportionally more young civil servants would like to remain with their current institution.

The level of dissatisfaction is negatively correlated with remuneration. In West Africa, for example, “satisfied” young people earn an average of €35 a month, whereas people who would like to change jobs earn just €27 a month and people hoping for promotion earn €29. This hierarchy is found irrespective of the institutional sector, socioeconomic group, or city. A similar pattern is found outside West Africa, with the only difference being that people who would like to be promoted earn more than people who want to keep their job. The difference reflects the fact that the prospects for promotion are restricted mainly to the highest-paid jobs.

The mismatch between young people’s preferences and real job opportunities is huge. Although the public sector (administration and public enterprises) created virtually no jobs in the two years preceding the survey (less than 4 percent of new jobs), 27 percent of young people still aspire to work in it (table 1.25). The informal sector, the main job provider during the two years before the survey, holds less drawing power for young people. In West Africa, for example, the sector accounted for 82 percent of job creation, but just 48 percent of job-seekers aspired to work in it. These findings are common to all 11 cities, although the extent to which aspirations are unrealistic varies considerably. Young people in Abidjan take the least account of the actual situation. Although fewer than 10,000 civil service jobs were filled in Abidjan in 2001–02, 140,000 young people aspired to secure one. Young people in Niamey have their feet a little more firmly on the ground: the city recruits about 5,000 civil servants from a pool of

Table 1.25 Job Aspirations of People 15–24 in 11 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Sector
(percent)

Sector	West Africa							Central Africa			Indian Ocean	
	Abidjan	Bamako	Cotonou	Dakar	Lomé	Niamey	Ouagadougou	WAEMU countries	Douala	Kinshasa	Yaoundé	Antananarivo
<i>Jobs wanted</i>												
Public administration	22.8	32.7	26.7	13.0	8.7	28.1	32.8	22.4	21.6	10.2	16.7	22.7
Public enterprises	3.5	6.0	7.2	2.9	11.4	4.8	4.6	4.8	7.7	12.7	4.2	6.8
Formal private sector	25.8	15.9	18.3	33.0	23.5	19.8	20.2	24.4	31.3	43.5	23.1	47.8
Informal sector	47.9	45.4	47.8	51.0	56.4	47.5	42.4	48.4	39.4	33.6	56.0	22.7
All	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Jobs created</i>												
Public administration	1.8	3.0	3.2	2.8	1.5	11.3	8.1	3.0	2.5	4.9	11.6	3.3
Public enterprises	0.2	1.2	1.9	1.3	1.2	1.0	1.2	0.8	1.2	3.0	1.5	1.4
Formal private sector	15.6	9.7	12.8	17.1	10.5	14.4	15.2	14.5	32.1	14.3	28.8	44.2
Informal sector	82.4	86.1	82.1	78.8	86.8	73.3	75.5	81.7	64.3	77.8	58.1	51.1
All	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Based on Phase 1 of the 1-2-3 surveys of selected countries (see table 1.1 for details).

Note: Findings are for 2000 and 2001 for Antananarivo, Bamako, Cotonou, and Lomé; 2001 and 2002 for Abidjan, Dakar, Niamey, and Ouagadougou; and 2004 and 2005 for Douala, Kinshasa, and Yaoundé. The formal private sector includes formal private businesses and nonprofit organizations.

27,000 young hopefuls. Yaoundé is unique, in that the jobs created are on the whole in line with aspirations.

Analysis of socioeconomic groups confirms that young people's ambitions are unrealistic. In West Africa, for example, nearly 35 percent of young people want to become managers, even though just 5 percent of positions are in management. The situation is similar in Antananarivo, Douala, and Kinshasa. Yaoundé displays similar patterns. Although young people appear to shun the idea of becoming laborers, contributing family workers, or apprentices (only 7 percent aspire to these occupations), these jobs account for 30–40 percent of jobs created.

These findings suggest that young job-seekers are heading for serious disappointment, which, if not corrected, could generate major social tensions. Although problems have not yet emerged and it is not a new issue (Berthelier and Roubaud 1993).

Adjustments need to be made in two directions. First, young people need to be made to understand that wage employment is not the be-all and end-all of a successful career and that the link between a university education and public employment is a thing of the past. Schools should prepare their students to envisage the possibility of setting up their own business by steering the curriculum more toward vocational training. Second, greater fairness and transparency are needed in managing formal sector jobs, particularly in the public sector. A more equitable distribution of these jobs needs to be promoted—by, for example, encouraging voluntary redundancies and early retirement to open the door for more qualified and motivated young people (see ILO 2010).

Notes

1. For a description of 1-2-3 surveys, see box O.1 in the overview.
2. The 10 countries are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. The 11 cities are Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; Bamako, Mali; Cotonou, Benin; Dakar, Senegal; Lomé, Togo; Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso; and Niamey, Niger, in West Africa; Douala and Yaoundé, Cameroon; and Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, in Central Africa; and Antananarivo, Madagascar.

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Urban Labor Markets in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Editors



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