



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



OVER 70 PER CENT OF YOUTH WORKING INFORMALLY IN THE MOBILE INDUSTRY ARE INVOLVED IN RETAIL AND MOBILE MONEY SERVICES.



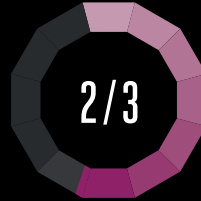
APPROXIMATELY **3/4** of youth working informally in the mobile industry in Sub-Saharan Africa are involved in retail and mobile money services.



This includes selling airtime, SIM cards, data, voice and entertainment bundles, selling phones, phone parts and accessories.



2/3 of these workers are transient, working temporarily in the industry to generate additional income.

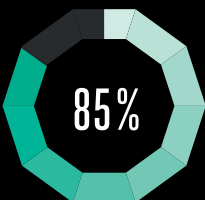


I have been working for two years as a SIM card re-seller. I enjoy it because it allows me to work part-time. For me, it is an easy way to earn some money in parallel to my studies.
Male, 21, Transient retail worker, Côte d'Ivoire

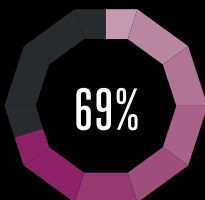
PHONE REPAIR IS THE MAIN ACTIVITY OF ONE IN 10 YOUTH WHO ARE INFORMAL WORKERS IN THE MOBILE VALUE CHAIN.



85% of phone repairers are male and self-employed.



69% SPEND LESS THAN **20 HOURS** on this activity per week, indicating underemployment.



The sector also offers opportunities for casual infrastructure workers through the roll-out of GSM network and fibre and includes riggers, trenchers, bricklayers and other casual labour.

Mobile app development creates freelance work opportunities for the more highly educated young people, many of whom are self-taught due to a lack of formal training opportunities.

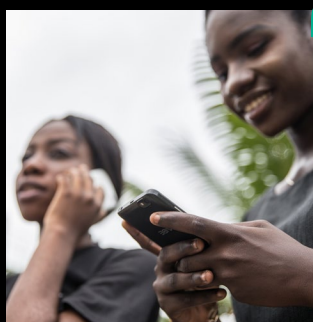
INCOME GENERATION IS THE MAIN DRIVER OF INFORMAL WORK.



The main driver of informal work in the mobile value chain is the opportunity to generate an income



in a situation where formal job opportunities are limited.



I would recommend the job because it helps you learn new skills and because phone technology is constantly evolving, there will always be new things to fix
Male, 23, Phone repairer, Ghana



Other drivers are diversification of income-generating activities and upskilling, which is a particularly significant driver for phone repairers.

*Findings based on 2020-2021 survey data from 2,412 youth working informally in the mobile industry in six Sub-Saharan African countries.

INCOME INSTABILITY IS THE MOST REPORTED CHALLENGE OF INFORMAL WORK.



THE FIVE

MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES

mentioned by youth working informally in the mobile industry in Sub-Saharan Africa include:

- 1 Income instability;
- 2 Lack of access to formal financial services;
- 3 Lack of formal proof of work experience;
- 4 Unable to benefit from public services; and
- 5 Lack of paid leave.



When it comes to telecommunication, there are network problems. That's my number one challenge.

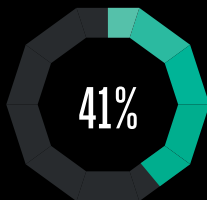
Female, 23, Retailer, Nigeria



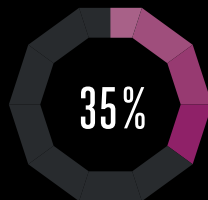
75 PER CENT OF YOUTH EXPERIENCED NEGATIVE INCOME IMPACTS DUE TO COVID-19.



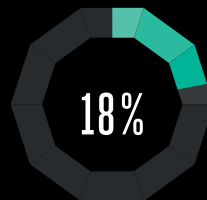
AS A RESULT OF COVID-19



of workers reported a **decline in customers.**



declared working less. In parallel, the sector has attracted individuals looking for opportunities.



of the respondents starting an activity in the sector because of COVID-19 to balance with a similar number stopping/ pausing the activity.

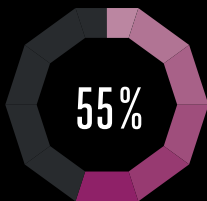


COVID-19 made me lose my job before I opened this mobile phone shop. I was a receptionist. Then after losing the job, I had no income. I used the savings that I had to start this mobile phone business.

Female, 30, Transient connectivity retailer, Kenya



55 PER CENT OF YOUTH WHO ARE INFORMAL WORKERS WANT FORMAL WORK IN ADDITION TO THEIR ACTIVITY IN THE MOBILE INDUSTRY .



of young informal workers in our study **would take a formal job in an established company.**



... and **KEEP THEIR CURRENT ACTIVITY ON THE SIDE.**



I would like to get a formal job, but I would also like to keep this activity on the side as I have developed a customer base and do not want to lose it.

Male, 28, Airtime, SIM and Digital product retailer, Kenya



*Findings based on 2020-2021 survey data from 2,412 youth working informally in the mobile industry in six Sub-Saharan African countries.



This initiative has been funded by UK aid from the UK government and is supported by the GSMA and its members.

The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the UK government's official policies.

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