Youth Development Project Ghana

BUDGET 2026 -RESETTING FOR GROWTH, JOBS AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

IMPLICATIONS AND IMPACTS ON YOUTH IN GHANA

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IMPLICATIONS AND IMPACTS ON YOUTH IN GHANA

A Critical Policy Analysis

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1. Introduction

Africa remains the world's youngest continent, with a median age of just 19.3 years (United Nations World Population Prospects 2024; Statista 2024). Ghana exemplifies this demographic reality: approximately 38 % of its total population roughly 13.3 million people falls within the nationally defined youth bracket of 15–35 years (Ghana Statistical Service 2021 Population and Housing Census; The Conversation 2023 analysis of 2021 data).

This youthful population represents an immense potential dividend a generation that could power sustained economic transformation if equipped with the right skills, opportunities, and incentives.

Yet Ghanaian youth face persistent crises: unemployment and underemployment affecting tens of percentage points of the cohort, 1.2 million NEETs, financial exclusion for 60 **%**, teenage pregnancy rates near 18 %, and an accelerating brain drain of approximately 100,000 skilled young people annually (World Bank 2025; GSS 2024; IOM Ghana 2025).

On 13 November 2025 under the theme "Resetting for Growth, Jobs and Economic Transformation", the Honorable Minister, Casiel Atto Forson presented the 2026 Budget with historic expectations for businesses and industry expects, investors and foreign trade partners and citizens, more importantly the youth. As the first full budget of a government elected on a strongly youth-centred manifesto, what is actually in the budget for the youth?

2. Summary of Key Youth-Focused Provisions in the 2026 Budget

2.1 Education & Skills

The government is investing heavily in building a smarter, more job-ready generation. The Education sector gets GH¢33.3 billion (an 18% increase), including a complete overhaul of the curriculum to teach coding, robotics, AI, and critical thinking from Junior High School. The hated double-track system in Senior High Schools ends by the close of 2026. A new University of Engineering and Agriculture is being built at Bunso with satellite campuses in deprived areas (GH¢1.2 billion starting funding), university is now free for students with disabilities, six new regional TVET excellence centres are coming, the TVET voucher programme adds another 10,000 places (total TVET budget GH¢850 million), and the One-Student-One-Laptop rollout is completed with GH¢400 million. In short, from JHS to university, the budget is giving young Ghanaians better tools and access than ever before.

2.2 Job Creation

Hundreds of thousands of new jobs are the headline promise. The 24-Hour Economy pilot starts with GH¢110 million in 2026 (rising to GH¢2.5 billion later) and offers tax breaks and cheaper night-shift electricity to factories, call centres, and creative businesses perfect for urban youth who don't mind working evenings or nights. The massive Big Push infrastructure programme spends GH¢57.5 billion on roads, railways, hospitals, and digital networks, which is expected to create 500,000–800,000 direct and indirect jobs mostly the kind of construction and engineering roles young men currently dominate. On top of that, a new focus on agro-processing (oil palm, cashew, garments, cotton) targets another 200,000 jobs, especially in rural and northern communities.

2.3 Business & Entrepreneurship

Starting a business just got easier and cheaper for young people. A GH¢10 billion Youth & Women Entrepreneurship Fund launches (GH¢2 billion available in 2026 alone), the VAT registration threshold jumps to GH¢750,000, and youth-led start-ups in priority sectors get tax holidays. The creative crowd receives a dedicated GH¢40 million fund for music, film, fashion, and theatre, while sports lovers benefit from GH¢250 million for new regional complexes and youth academies.

2.4 Youth Institutions

The institutions that directly serve young people are getting serious upgrades. The Ministry of Youth and Sports budget rises 22% to GH¢1.18 billion, the National Youth Authority jumps 35% to GH¢420 million (with emphasis on leadership and civic training), the old Youth Employment Agency is reborn as a leaner National Job Centre with GH¢800 million seed money, and National Service keeps its GH¢1.4 billion while adding entrepreneurship modules.

2.5 Everyday Money in Your Pocket

Indirectly, many measures put cash straight back into young pockets: the e-levy, betting tax, and COVID levy are gone for good; VAT on electricity is reduced; industrial power tariffs are cheaper (especially at night); inflation is targeted at single digits; and the cedi is meant to stay steadier. For students, gig workers, and entry-level employees, life in 2026 should simply cost less.

The 2026 Budget is the most financially ambitious and youth-oriented in Ghana's history, committing unprecedented resources to education, skills, infrastructure jobs, and entrepreneurship. But does the budget really address youth challenges that influence a long term growth?

3 Youth Development and Policy Context

3.1 Definition of Youth and Policy Context

For the purposes of this budget/policy synopsis, "youth" in the Ghanaian context refers to all individuals aged 15 to 35 years. This definition is deliberately harmonised across national and continental frameworks to ensure coherence with both legal and socio-cultural realities.

The African Youth Charter (2006) defines youth as persons aged 15–35 years. Ghana's own policy and legislative instruments including the National Youth Policy (2010, currently under review) and the National Youth Authority Act, 2016 (Act 939) adopt this same age bracket. Although global institutions such as the United Nations and the World Health Organisation define youth as persons aged 15–24 years, and the Commonwealth adopts 15–29 years, Ghana's broader definition reflects contextual factors such as extended educational timelines, national service requirements, delayed entry into formal employment, and prolonged financial dependence typical in sub-Saharan socio-economic settings (National Youth Authority, 2016; African Union, 2006).

Based on current demographic projections, Ghana's 15–35 youth cohort comprises approximately 13.3 million people, representing about 57% of the country's working-age population (Ghana Statistical Service, *2024 Population Projections*; World Bank, 2025). This represents the largest a demographic bulge that constitutes either an unparalleled opportunity for accelerated national development or, if neglected, a potential driver of social instability, unemployment crises, and political discontent.

The National Youth Policy conceptualises youth development as:

"…the process of providing opportunities that support young people acquire knowledge, skills, competencies, and the right attitudes needed to realise their potential for optimum productivity through adolescence to adulthood… and building their leadership strengths."*(Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2010, p. 7)*

More than twenty-five years after the first draft of the National Youth Policy, and nine years after the passage of the NYA Act, a critical policy question persists: *Does the 2026 National Budget introduce a transformative, coordinated, and future-oriented youth development approach as envisaged by earlier policy commitments, or does it merely perpetuate incremental, traditional interventions that limit Ghanaian youth productivity to domestic boundaries—particularly at a time when competing nations are aggressively investing in attracting, skilling, and retaining young talent?*

3.2 Youth Challenges in Ghana

Data already illustrate a severe and deepening youth development crisis in Ghana. Multiple national and international datasets point to entrenched structural disadvantages affecting Ghanaian youth:

- Youth unemployment stands at 12.6%, with underemployment at 14.7%, and significantly higher rates in rural and peri-urban areas (World Bank, 2025; Ghana Statistical Service, 2024).
- Approximately 1.2 million young people fall within the NEET category (Not in Education, Employment, or Training), marking a 5% annual increase over the last five years (GSS, 2023).
- 27.2% of the youth population live below the national poverty line, with severe pockets of deprivation in fishing communities and northern regions (UNICEF, 2022).
- 60% of youth remain excluded from the formal financial system, while only 25% possess basic financial literacy (World Bank, 2023).
- Teenage pregnancy rates remain at approximately 18%, and HIV prevalence among youth continues to show persistent levels, particularly in urban poor settlements (Ghana Health Service / WHO, 2023).

- Civic participation remains critically low, with only 10% of youth taking part in district-level or local governance processes (Afrobarometer Round 9, 2023).
- An estimated 100,000 skilled and semi-skilled youth emigrate annually, positioning Ghana among African countries with the fastest-growing rates of youth-related brain drain (GSS Migration Report, 2023; IOM, 2024).

These interlinked challenges spanning employment, education, health, civic engagement, migration, and financial inclusion—are not new. However, they have intensified significantly in the period leading to and following the change of government in January 2025, thereby elevating the political urgency for decisive policy action. Consequently, expectations for the 2026 National Budget were exceptionally high, with stakeholders anticipating a bold, paradigm-shifting approach capable of breaking from the historical pattern of fragmented, incremental youth interventions.

3.3 Macroeconomic Framework and Indirect Youth Benefits

The 2026 Budget establishes one of the most favourable macroeconomic environments for Ghanaian youth in over a decade, projecting real GDP growth of 5.0–5.2%, a decline in headline inflation to single digits (targeting approximately 8% by end-2026), a primary surplus of 1.5% of GDP, and a sharp fiscal consolidation that reduces the overall deficit to 3.2% of GDP (Ministry of Finance, 2025, pp. 91–99). These targets, aligned with the extended IMF Extended Credit Facility programme through 2028, aim to restore investor confidence and crowd-in private-sector activity—the ultimate engine of sustainable youth employment.

Youth-specific indirect benefits are substantial and deliberate:

- Full abolition of the e-levy, betting tax, COVID-19 levy, emissions levy, and special import levy, combined with a reduction in VAT on electricity and an increase in the VAT registration threshold to GH¢750,000, will directly boost disposable income for young informal workers, gig economy participants, and students (Ministry of Finance, 2025, pp. 105–109).
- Cheaper industrial electricity tariffs and 24-hour economy incentives lower operational costs for businesses, encouraging expansion in sectors where youth

predominate, such as manufacturing, agro-processing, hospitality, and creative industries (Ministry of Finance, 2025, p. 117).

- A more predictable exchange rate and falling inflation reduce the cost-of-living pressures that hit low-income youth households hardest, while strengthened digital infrastructure under the Big Push programme improves access to online learning and remote work opportunities (Ministry of Finance, 2025, pp. 124–126).

These measures represent genuine progress. The World Bank notes that macroeconomic stabilisation alone can raise private-sector hiring rates by 15–20% in post-crisis environments similar to Ghana's (World Bank, 2025). For a cohort where 22.5% of 15–35-year-olds were unemployed or underemployed in 2024 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2025 Quarterly Labour Force Survey), even modest improvements in purchasing power and business confidence translate into thousands of additional youth jobs.

Yet these remain enabling conditions, not game-changers. High-income countries offer African (including Ghanaian) graduates salaries 10–20 times higher, immediate post-study work rights, and fast-track permanent residency pathways that Ghana cannot match through fiscal discipline alone (International Organization for Migration, 2024; UK Home Office, 2025). As the UK prepares to allow in-country switching to its Innovator Founder visa from 25 November 2025 explicitly targeting African STEM and entrepreneurial talent (UK Home Office Statement of Changes, November 2025) macro stability without disruptive retention mechanisms risks turning Ghana into an expensive training ground for the Global North.

4. Positive Impacts and What the Budget Gets Right

The 2026 Budget represents the most youth-centred fiscal statement in Ghana's history, both in financial volume and policy ambition. It explicitly positions the 15–35 cohort as the primary driver of the "Resetting for Growth, Jobs and Economic Transformation" agenda (2026 Budget Statement, p. 89).

Among its clearest successes:

- **Scale of investment**: The combined education, TVET, digital skills, infrastructure, and entrepreneurship allocations exceed any previous year. The education sector alone receives GH¢33.3 billion (+18% year-on-year), while capital expenditure under the Big Push rises to GH¢57.5 billion, much of which will flow to youth-dominated construction and agro-processing jobs (2026 Budget Statement, pp. 141, 124–125).
- **Production-oriented job creation**: The 24-Hour Economy pilot (GH¢110 million in 2026, scaling sharply thereafter) and agro-processing push target sectors where youth already predominate (2026 Budget Statement, pp. 126–130). The projected 500,000–800,000 infrastructure-related jobs and 200,000 agro-value-chain jobs are realistic given historical multipliers from similar capital expenditure surges.
- **Inclusion signals**: Free tertiary education for persons with disabilities, six new regional TVET excellence centres (many in deprived areas), and satellite university campuses in the north demonstrate at least rhetorical commitment to regional and disability equity (2026 Budget Statement, p. 132).
- **Institutional strengthening**: The National Youth Authority receives a 35% increase to GH¢420 million, and the Youth Employment Agency is restructured into a leaner National Job Centre, signalling an attempt to reduce the fragmentation that plagued previous youth programmes (2026 Budget Statement, Appendix 4A).

In raw numbers, the government claims the budget will directly or indirectly benefit well over one million young people in 2026 alone (author's aggregation from 2026 Budget Statement, pp. 124–138). If even two-thirds of these targets are met, the 2026 Budget will mark a genuine quantitative leap forward in youth empowerment.

5. Critical Policy Gap: The Budget Fails to Compete for Talent and Risks Entrenching Youth Drain

Although the 2026 Budget is substantial in scope and reflects a genuine commitment to youth development, it remains anchored in a traditional, supply-driven African policy framework that is increasingly inadequate in a rapidly evolving global labour market. The approach is predominantly inward-looking and supply-side, with emphasis on expanding educational infrastructure, promoting TVET, providing entrepreneurship loans, supporting agricultural inputs, increasing construction-related jobs, and implementing commendable initiatives such as the *the government's ongoing digital skills and coding initiatives*. While these measures will undoubtedly produce a larger pool of better-skilled Ghanaian youth, they fail to address a more urgent structural issue: the global competition for African talent now far outpaces Ghana's current youth retention mechanisms.

5.1 Intensifying Global Competition for Ghanaian Talent

As of November 2025, advanced economies have aggressively expanded policies designed to attract and retain young African professionals, including Ghanaians:

- The **United Kingdom's Innovator Founder visa reforms** (effective 25 November 2025) allow international students— including thousands of Ghanaians—to transition directly to an entrepreneur visa without returning home, coupled with a fast-track route to indefinite leave to remain (UK Home Office, 2025).
- **Canada's Express Entry system** now awards maximum points to STEM graduates aged under 30 with only one year of work experience (IRCC, 2025).
- **Germany, the Netherlands, and Australia** have expanded post-study work permits, eased qualification recognition, and raised salary thresholds for African professionals (OECD *International Migration Outlook*, 2025).

These policies create powerful pull factors that Ghana's current budget framework does not sufficiently counterbalance.

5.2 Absence of Proven, Competitive Youth Retention Mechanisms

Despite the scale of investment in youth skilling, the 2026 Budget lacks several internationally tested mechanisms that have successfully retained young professionals in comparable economies. Notably missing are:

- **A wage-subsidy first-year employment programme**, such as the Tamheer/YES model where governments cover 50–70% of a fresh graduate's first-year salary. This model has facilitated more than 190,000 private-sector youth placements in South Africa since 2018 (Youth Employment Service South Africa, 2025).

- **A lifelong individual learning wallet**, similar to Singapore's system, which provides adults with annual financial credits (equivalent to GH¢3,000–5,000) for any certified local or global learning programme.

- **Bonded-return national scholarships**, modelled on South Korea's long-term talent strategy, which significantly contributed to the country's industrialisation.

- **Large-scale, equity-free national seed funding**, comparable to the Tony Elumelu Foundation's US$5,000 grants. The Foundation reaches only approximately 1,000 youths annually, and no government programme currently matches this at scale.

- **Legislated or incentivised paid apprenticeship quotas** for large firms, similar to the German dual-training system, which maintains youth unemployment below 7%.

The absence of such mechanisms means that while Ghana is investing heavily in expanding human capital, it is not adopting the policy tools required to retain that capital domestically.

5.3 Ghana's Escalating Youth Brain Drain

The consequences are already visible. Ghana continues to lose a significant proportion of its skilled labour force to migration. The International Organization for Migration (IOM Ghana) estimates that approximately 100,000 skilled and semi-skilled youth emigrated in 2024, with the trend accelerating in 2025 (IOM Ghana, 2025). This represents a substantial loss of national investment, as many of these individuals benefited from education and training financed wholly or partly by the State.

5.4 Implications for National Development

Without a decisive shift from a "train and hope" model to a "train and retain" or, more ambitiously, "train and competitively retain" model, the 2026 Budget risks unintentionally functioning as a large-scale youth export subsidy programme. Under current conditions, Ghana may continue to invest billions of cedis in developing high-quality human capital—only for other countries, which did not contribute to the cost of their education or training, to benefit from the returns.

A modern youth policy must therefore recognise that development is no longer solely about producing skilled citizens; it must create compelling incentives for young people to build their futures in Ghana. Without such a paradigm shift, the country's most significant demographic asset may become its greatest developmental vulnerability.

6. The Disruptive Leap: Policy Recommendations to Make Ghana Irresistible for Its Own Youth

The 2026 Budget provides a credible foundation for youth development; however, transforming it into a globally competitive, retention-oriented national strategy requires the adoption of bold, disruptive, and scalable interventions. Several jurisdictions—including Singapore, Germany, South Korea, South Africa, Rwanda, and Saudi Arabia—have achieved exceptional youth employment outcomes through targeted, high-leverage reforms. Ghana can replicate and adapt these successes through a phased package of interventions enacted through a "Ghana Youth Retention Act", supported by a 2026 Supplementary Budget or integrated into the 2027 fiscal cycle without undermining existing IMF fiscal commitments.

6.1 Policy Actions: Ghana Youth Retention Act

6.1.1. Salary-Subsidy Employment Programme (Tamheer/YES Model)

Introduce legislation mandating a national salary-subsidy scheme in which the Government finances 60% of the first-year salary (capped at GH¢4,000 per month) for any private or public institution that creates a new full-time job for a Ghanaian aged 18–35.

- **Estimated annual cost:** GH¢3–4 billion for 100,000 placements.
- **Funding options:** Reallocation of 5–7% of Big Push capital expenditure and a 0.5% temporary corporate levy on large firms.
- **Evidence base:** South Africa's YES initiative, which facilitated over 190,000 youth placements since 2018, and Saudi Arabia's Tamheer Programme, which has become a cornerstone of graduate employment policy (Youth Employment Service South Africa, 2025; Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Tamheer Programme, 2025).

6.1.2 National Equity-Free Seed Grant Programme

Establish a national grant scheme providing GH¢75,000 (≈US$5,000) in non-refundable, equity-free capital to 50,000 youth-led start-ups annually, contingent on successful completion of an accredited accelerator programme.

- **Priority beneficiaries:** Graduates of the *The government's ongoing digital skills and coding initiatives (including the The government's ongoing digital skills and coding initiatives launched earlier this year)*.
- **Projected cost:** GH¢3.75 billion in 2027.
- **Funding strategy:** A blended approach involving a diaspora bond issuance and targeted GETFund reallocations.
- **Evidence base:** Scaled-up model of the Tony Elumelu Foundation programme, expanded by a factor of 50.

6.2 Medium-Term Structural Reforms: Building a Competitive Youth Economy

6.2.1 Skills Wallet Ghana

Introduce a universal, portable SkillsWallet credit system granting every citizen aged 18–35 an annual GH¢4,000 learning credit, redeemable at accredited local or international training institutions, both online and in-person.

- **Key features:** Transferable, inflation-indexed, and lifelong.
- **Projected cost at full rollout:** GH¢8–10 billion annually from 2028.
- **Evidence base:** Modelled on Singapore's *SkillsFuture Credit* system (2025), which significantly increased adult upskilling and labour productivity.

6.2.2 Bonded Global Talent Programme

Offer fully funded scholarships for 5,000 top-performing STEM students each year to pursue studies at leading global universities, conditional upon a seven-year mandatory return service in Ghana or repayment of three times the investment value.

- **Estimated cost:** GH¢2 billion per year.

- **Evidence base:** South Korea's bonded scholarship model, which played a foundational role in building globally competitive industries such as Samsung, SK Group, and Hyundai.

6.2.3 National Dual Education Act

Enact legislation requiring all firms with more than 50 employees to host a mandatory quota of paid apprentices, whose wages are co-funded (50/50) by the employer and the State.

- **Objective:** Align learning with industry needs while fast-tracking school-to-work transitions.
- **Evidence base:** Germany's dual vocational training model, which continues to maintain youth unemployment rates below **7%** (German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, 2025).

6.2.4 Diaspora Return Bonus

Provide a government-funded salary top-up guaranteeing 150% of market salary for the first three years for returning Ghanaian professionals with a minimum of five years' international experience in priority sectors (e.g., health, engineering, technology, agriculture, creative industries).

- **Projected cost:** GH¢1–1.5 billion annually.
- **Evidence base:** Rwanda's professionally targeted diaspora return schemes, adapted and scaled for Ghana's labour market.

6.3 Cost-Benefit Outlook

The combined cost of these six measures is estimated at GH¢18–22 billion over the first three years, representing less than 4% of projected GDP over the same period. The long-term macroeconomic and demographic dividends, however, are likely to be substantial. The proposed reforms would:

- Reduce youth unemployment and underemployment at scale,
- Reverse the accelerating rate of skilled youth outmigration,
- Stimulate private-sector job creation,

- Enhance productivity through continuous skills upgrading, and
- Position Ghana as a leading African hub for talent development and retention.

Countries such as South Korea, Singapore, Germany, Rwanda, and Saudi Arabia have demonstrated that such strategic investments produce exponential returns when embedded within coherent national youth strategies. Ghana's adoption of these measures would therefore mark a transformative shift from a **training-focused** system to a globally competitive, retention-driven youth development model.

7. Equity and Inclusion Analysis

While the 2026 Budget signals commitment to inclusive growth, a closer examination reveals persistent equity gaps that could undermine its impact on the most vulnerable youth sub-groups.

- **Gender**: Infrastructure-led job creation (Big Push, 24-Hour Economy factories) historically benefits young men far more than young women, who are under-represented in construction and night-shift manufacturing (Ghana Statistical Service Labour Force Survey, 2024). No ring-fenced targets or incentives exist for female participation in these flagship programmes. The government's ongoing digital skills and coding initiatives which has achieved near gender parity (≈48–52% female in early cohorts, but agro-processing and entrepreneurship funds lack explicit gender quotas (Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation, 2025; 2026 Budget Statement, pp. 126–130).
- **Regional Disparities**: New TVET centres and university satellite campuses are deliberately placed in deprived and northern regions, a welcome correction to past Accra–Kumasi bias (2026 Budget Statement, p. 132). However, the largest job engines (Accra–Kumasi Expressway upgrades, southern agro-industrial parks, 24-Hour Economy pilots in urban zones) remain southern-concentrated. Youth unemployment in the five northern regions is already 2–3 times the national average (GSS, 2024).
- **Rural vs. Urban**: Rural youth (≈55% of the 15–35 cohort) receive poultry inputs and some agro-processing promises, but the budget offers no rural-specific

digital connectivity plan beyond general infrastructure. Without affordable broadband, rural participants in the government's ongoing digital skills and coding initiatives (including the One Million Coders Programme launched in 2025) will remain disadvantaged.

- **Disability**: Free tertiary education for persons with disabilities is ground-breaking, yet the budget is silent on physical accessibility of new TVET centres, workplace accommodations in the 24-Hour Economy, or targeted job quotas (2026 Budget Statement, p. 132).
- **NEET and Out-of-School Youth**: The 1.2 million disengaged youth receive no dedicated pathway. Past YEA modules were criticised for urban bias and short duration; the rebranded National Job Centre has no published strategy for hard-to-reach NEETs (Institute of Economic Affairs Ghana, 2025).

Without mandatory equity safeguards, independent monitoring dashboards, and ring-fenced sub-allocations, the 2026 Budget risks widening rather than narrowing existing divides.

8. Conclusion and Call to Action

The 2026 Budget Statement and Economic Policy is, without question, the most youth-oriented financial document Ghana has ever produced. With over one million direct and indirect youth beneficiaries targeted, unprecedented allocations to education and digital skills, and a clear production-focused job-creation strategy, it lays a solid quantitative foundation for harnessing the country's demographic dividend (2026 Budget Statement, pp. 89–138).

Yet this very ambition exposes its fatal limitation: it remains a conventional African youth budget at the exact moment when the global competition for African talent has become ferocious and permanent. By investing billions of public cedis to produce better-educated, better-skilled young Ghanaians while offering no disruptive mechanism to make Ghana more attractive than London, Toronto, Berlin, or Dubai, the government risks subsidising the brain drain it claims to fight.

Ghana is no longer in 2010, when "more TVET centres and more roads" were enough. In late 2025, the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, Australia, and the Gulf states are aggressively rewriting immigration rules to capture exactly the engineers, coders, nurses, and entrepreneurs Ghana is now training at scale (UK Home Office, 2025; IRCC Canada, 2025; OECD, 2025). Unless the country moves urgently from volume to leverage — from training youth to making Ghana financially and professionally irresistible — the celebrated youth bulge will become a youth exodus.

Call to Action

- Parliament must demand a 2026 Supplementary Budget that includes at least the Tamheer/YES-style salary subsidy and the national equity-free seed grant programme.
- The National Youth Authority, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, should publish quarterly public dashboards tracking youth job placement, retention, and migration trends.
- Civil society, the private sector, and the diaspora must coalesce around a "Ghana Youth Retention Coalition" to advocate for the full Disruptive Leap package.

Ghana has the resources, the political will appears present, and the models exist across the world. What remains is the courage to stop doing what every African country does and previous leaders have done and start doing what the countries that actually harvested their demographic dividends did.

The window is closing. The 2026 Budget is a strong beginning, but only a Disruptive Leap will turn Ghana's youth bulge into the economic miracle the continent has long been promised.

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