



Contributions of the Non-Profit Sector in Creating Dignified and Fulfilling Work for Young People in Burkina Faso

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ABSTRACT



This literature review examines the contribution of the non-profit sector to the creation of dignified and fulfilling work and opportunities for young people in Burkina Faso. Despite sustained economic growth averaging 5.2% per year, poverty and unemployment—particularly among rural youth—remain persistent challenges. Against this backdrop, non-profit organisations (NPOs) have become key actors in the country’s socio-economic development through initiatives that provide training, advocacy, and direct employment for young people. The study employs a two-step methodological approach combining bibliographic review and institutional document analysis. Findings reveal a lack of comprehensive data on the economic and social contributions of NPOs, as well as limited evidence regarding the quality of jobs created for youth. Nonetheless, available literature and field reports suggest that NPOs play an important role in promoting employability, social inclusion, and human dignity through numerous programmes. However, the absence of disaggregated statistics and systematic evaluation constrains a full assessment of their impact. This study highlights the need for large-scale, mixed-method research to map the non-profit sector and measure its contributions to dignified and fulfilling work. By doing so, policymakers and development actors can better leverage the sector’s potential to advance inclusive and sustainable youth employment in Burkina Faso.

Keywords: Non-profit sector, non-governmental organisations, civil society, youth employment, dignified and fulfilling work, Burkina Faso

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CAPSI Director

DISCLAIMER

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ATT QUART	Monde Association ATD Quart Monde
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
ILO	International Labour Organization
INS	Institut National de la Statistique (National Institute of Statistics)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
SAGSD	Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WCARO	West and Central Africa Regional Office
WB	World Bank



01

INTRODUCTION

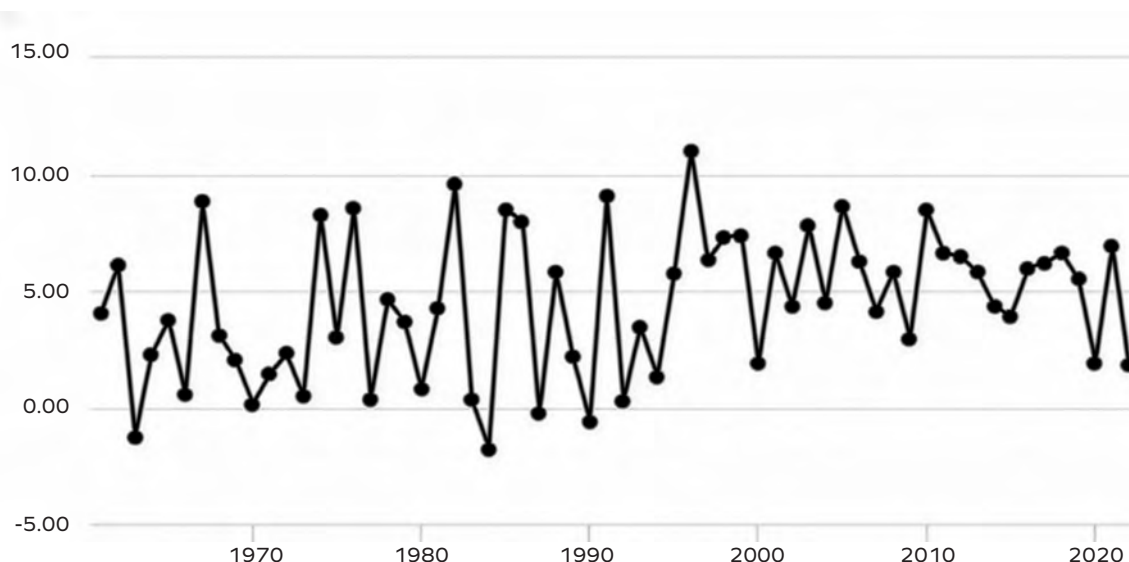
Burkina Faso has associational life. This is exemplified by the presence of many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in the field of socio-economic development. Indeed, as indicated in the 2021–2022 Human Development Index (HDI) Report, Burkina Faso ranked 184th out of 191 countries, and more than 40% of its population lives below the poverty line (World Bank, 2024).

The context of economic fragility has resulted in a nearly permanent humanitarian crisis, leading to the rise of many local and international associations, as well as the establishment of non-profit organisations (NPOs) dedicated to assisting the population through various initiatives. These NPOs employ numerous individuals to carry out their programmes. In the country, NPOs contribute to job creation for young people through training, advocacy, and direct employment, among other initiatives.

Although relatively low, the unemployment rate for individuals aged 15 and older in the country has risen significantly over the past 20 years, increasing from 2.5% in 2000 to 8.15% in 2023 (Perspective Mondiale, 2024). Additionally, unemployment and poverty rates are generally higher in rural areas than in urban areas. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)'s 2020 report, "rural poverty contributes significantly to 93% of the total incidence of national poverty. Furthermore, the impact of rural areas on the severity and depth of poverty exceeds 90%" (UNFRA West and Central Africa Regional Office [WCARO], 2020).

In 2011, Burkina Faso launched the Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development (SAGSD) to build on the reforms initiated with the adoption of the first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper in 2000. However, as illustrated in Figure 1, this initiative did not lead to a significant reduction in the poverty rate.

FIGURE 1: Annual GDP growth from 1961 to 2022.



Perspective monde, date de consultation: 13/08/2024, source: Banque mondiale

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2021), despite an average annual economic growth rate of 5.2% (see Figure 1), the decline in poverty incidence was limited to 2.5 percentage points over the last decade, 2010–2020. Poverty is more prevalent among the young and rural population. As Kindo (2020) noted:

In addition to its extreme youth, the population is mostly rural (77%) and lives mainly from agropastoral activities (86%). Moreover, while young people in general have difficulty accessing the labour market, young people in rural areas in particular tend to be excluded from the labour market. Young graduates and urban dwellers are generally favoured to the detriment of rural youth. It is this state of affairs that motivates the various actors to work in order to reverse the trend.

Faced with the pressing challenge of youth unemployment in Burkina Faso, the non-profit sector is contributing to economic development through various targeted initiatives, including the creation of meaningful employment opportunities. It is in this perspective that this topic is inscribed: *The Contribution of the Non-Profit Sector to the Creation of Dignified and Fulfilling Work and Opportunities for Young People in Burkina Faso*. Our literature review will examine the different economic contributions of the non-profit sector to dignified and fulfilling work for young

people in Burkina Faso. To achieve this, after the methodology section, I will (1) define the main concepts; (2) take stock of the context of youth employment in Burkina Faso; (3) then analyse the economic contribution of the non-profit sector to youth employment; (4) and the quality of jobs created by the non-profit sector to see whether there they contribute to dignified and fulfilling work for young people, in general, (5) and for various categories of young people. (6) The literature review will also explore possibilities and opportunities for increased employment in the non-profit sector to provide dignified and fulfilling work for young people in Burkina Faso, (7) and assess knowledge gaps within the non-profit sector to provide dignified and fulfilling work for young people.

In response to the urgent challenge of youth unemployment in Burkina Faso, the non-profit sector is actively contributing to economic development through various targeted initiatives aimed at creating meaningful employment opportunities. This brings us to the focus of our discussion: *The Contribution of the Non-Profit Sector to Creating Dignified and Fulfilling Work Opportunities for Young People in Burkina Faso*. This literature review will examine the various economic contributions of the non-profit sector toward providing dignified and fulfilling work for young people in the country. To accomplish this, our methodology will include the following steps:

1. Defining the main concepts.
2. Assessing the context of youth employment in Burkina Faso.
3. Analysing the economic contributions of the non-profit sector to youth employment.
4. Evaluating the quality of jobs created by the non-profit sector to determine whether they contribute to dignified and fulfilling work for young people in general, as well as for specific categories of youth.
5. Exploring potential opportunities for increased employment in the non-profit sector that offers dignified and fulfilling work for young people in Burkina Faso.
6. Identifying knowledge gaps within the non-profit sector concerning dignified and fulfilling work for youth.



This structured approach aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the non-profit sector's role in enhancing employment opportunities for the youth in Burkina Faso.





02

METHODOLOGY

This literature review examines the role of the non-profit sector in creating dignified and fulfilling job opportunities for young people in Burkina Faso. The methodology used consists of three steps.

First, a bibliographic search was conducted using Cairn.info, Google Scholar, and JSTOR. The search focused on the following keywords: non-profit sector in Burkina Faso; NGOs in Burkina Faso; civil society in Burkina Faso; youth and employment in Burkina Faso; non-profit sector and youth employment; non-profit sector and economic development in Burkina Faso; civil society and economic development in Burkina Faso; and the role of the non-profit sector in providing dignified and fulfilling work to address the needs of youth in Burkina Faso.

This literature search generated reference lists that included scientific articles, books, theses, study reports, and activity reports from NPOs. It should be noted that many of the bibliographic references concerned youth employment in general, but few addressed the non-profit sector and its role in creating jobs for youth.

The lack of documentation led to the second step, which involved reaching out to several ministries related to the economy, development, the non-profit sector, youth employment, and the legal framework governing NPOs and civil society. This step was slow and challenging as it required sending numerous formal letters to secure appointments and gain access to the documentation produced by government agencies. Ultimately, this stage of the literature review provided access to a database of civil society organisations (CSOs), including legally registered NPOs in Burkina Faso. While the Ministry of Youth and the Promotion of Youth Entrepreneurship have some resources related to youth employment, there is no specific data on the jobs created by NPOs for the youth in the country (Ministry of Youth, Promotion of Entrepreneurship and Employment, 2019, 2022).

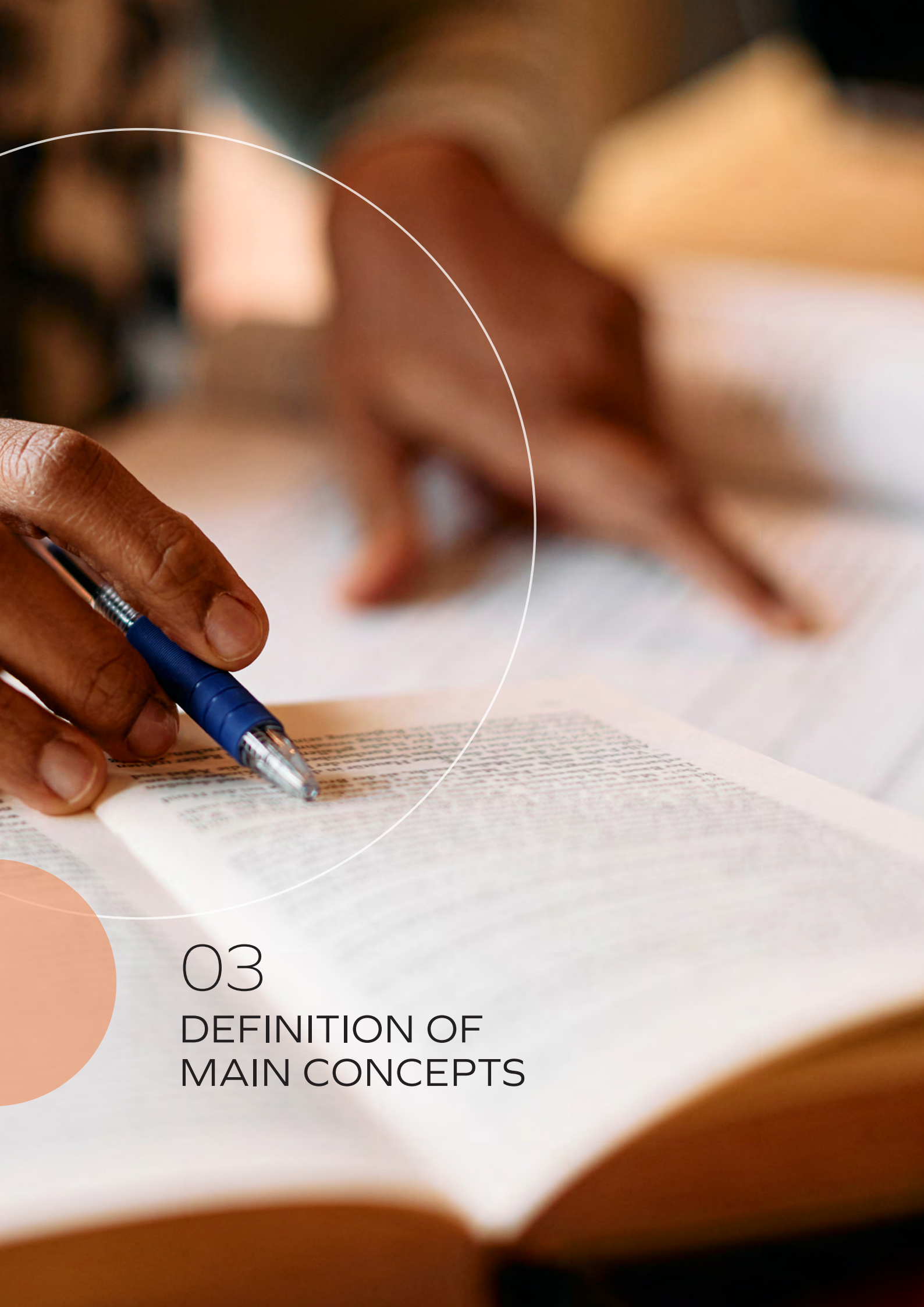
The Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Protection lacks information on the quality of jobs generated by the non-profit sector.

There is currently no data available on the quality of jobs created by NPOs in Burkina Faso. The Ministry of Economy, Finance, and Foresight publish annual statistical reports on the contributions of NGOs to the country's economic development. However, these reports consist of aggregated statistics for both international and national NGOs that have partnered with the Ministry to implement specific development projects. As such, they do not allow for an assessment of the economic contributions of NPOs, particularly in terms of creating dignified and fulfilling jobs for youth in Burkina Faso. Likewise, the Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Protection lacks information on the quality of jobs generated by the non-profit sector.

The shortcomings in the documentary research led us to the third step of our methodology. This step involved recruiting several research assistants to conduct exploratory telephone interviews in Ouagadougou with various NPOs working in fields such as socio-professional training, professional integration, job creation, microcredit, and financing income-generating activities for young people. Through these interviews, we gained access to some activity reports and insights into the non-profit sector's role in creating dignified and fulfilled jobs and opportunities for youth in Burkina Faso. However, these reports represented only individual examples, highlighting the contributions of the non-profit sector in providing quality jobs for young people.

Thus, the methodological limitations of this literature review include, among others, the scarcity of information on the non-profit sector and its economic contribution to creating dignified and fulfilling employment opportunities for young people. There is a lack of statistics that present the state and economic contribution of the non-profit sector to job creation for youth in Burkina Faso, as well as the difficulty in generalising the conclusions of the literature review to the entire non-profit sector in Burkina Faso. This problem of representativeness could be solved later through a large-scale survey. However, the fact remains that this literature review still provides valuable insights into the non-profit sector's contribution to creating dignified and fulfilling jobs and opportunities for young people in Burkina Faso. It should also be noted that the literature review was initially written in French before being translated into English. This translation has some limitations in terms of word choice and concept translation.

The methodological limitations of this literature review include, among others, the lack of information regarding the non-profit sector and its economic contribution to creating dignified and fulfilling employment and opportunities for young people. There is a scarcity of global statistics that illustrate the current state and economic impact of the non-profit sector on youth job creation in Burkina Faso. Additionally, the conclusions drawn from this literature review may not be fully representative of the entire non-profit sector in the country. This issue of representativeness could be addressed through a future large-scale survey. Nonetheless, this literature review provides valuable insights into the non-profit sector's role in offering dignified and fulfilling employment opportunities for young people in Burkina Faso. It is also important to note that the literature review was originally written in French and subsequently translated into English, which may have introduced some limitations in terms of word choice and concept translation.



03

DEFINITION OF
MAIN CONCEPTS

The concept of the non-profit sector

In Burkina Faso, “Law No. 064-2015/CNT on Freedom of Association” hardly explicitly defines the non-profit sector. This Law distinguishes three types of organisations: associations, NGOs, and trade unions:

- a) *Association* means any group of natural or legal persons, national or foreign, with a permanent, non-profit-making vocation and whose object is the attainment of common objectives, in particular in the cultural, sporting, social, spiritual, religious, scientific, professional, or socio-economic fields (Burkina Faso, 2015. *Loi No. 064-2015/CNT, portant liberté d’association*, Article 3). It is only in the case of the definition of association that the Law explicitly mentions the non-profit character by defining it as follows: “non-profit association” has a very broad content that includes almost all CSOs.
- b) *Non-governmental organisation* means any authorised foreign association working in the field of economic, social, and cultural development of the country or a specific region and which has signed an establishment agreement with the Ministry of the Economy and Finance or any registered national association which is active in the field of the economic, social, and cultural development of the country or a specific region and which has obtained an approval by the Ministry of the Economy and Finance after the signing of a framework agreement (Burkina Faso, 2015. *Loi No. 064-2015/CNT, portant liberté d’association*, Article 3). As defined, NGOs are part of the non-profit sector. According to the 2015 Law, what distinguishes an NGO from an ordinary association is that it intervenes in the fields of economic, social, and cultural development with authorisation from the Ministry of Economy and Finance. Consequently, this review will give a prime place to NGOs in their contribution to the economy and to the creation and promotion of dignified and fulfilling jobs for youth.
- c) *Trade union*: any organisation or group of workers’ or employers’ whose aim is to promote and defend the moral, material and professional interests of its members” (Burkina Faso, 2015. *Loi No. 064-2015/CNT, portant liberté d’association*, Article 3). According to the Act, a union is part of the non-profit sector insofar as it does not aim to enrich its members but to defend the moral, material, and professional interests of its members. In this review, trade unions are important because they intervene directly in issues relating to the world of work and the improvement of working conditions for both workers and employers.



According to the 2015 Law, the non-profit sector in Burkina Faso includes associations, NGOs, and unions. These organisations do not aim to generate profits or distribute them among their members. Instead, their purpose is altruistic, focusing on providing services that benefit the community. One shortcoming of this definition is that it does not differentiate between trade unions, which membership is workers, from employers’ associations that represent employers.

The concept of decent work

Burkina Faso adheres to the ILO’s (2021) definition of decent work as “productive work that ensures a fair income, rights, social protection and supports sustainable economic growth. It is a source of dignity and the foundation of peace, social justice, greater equality and is at the heart of the UN’s 2030 Agenda” (ILO, 2022). Specifically, decent work includes “access to productive and decently paid work, security at work and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social inclusion, freedom for individuals to express their demands, to organize and participate in decisions that affect their lives, and equal opportunities and treatment for all, men and women” (Novethic, n.d.).

The *Country Programme for the Promotion of Decent Work (DWCP) in Burkina Faso, 2020–2022*, developed in collaboration with the ILO, states that “The achievement of the decent work agenda, which integrates the promotion of international labour standards, the creation of more and better jobs, the social protection of workers, as well as social dialogue, constitutes a major challenge for Burkina Faso today” (ILO, 2021, p. 21).

The notion of meaningful work

The concept of meaningful work goes beyond merely having a decent job; it encompasses work that offers a sense of fulfilment and purpose. While meaningful work is a widely discussed topic in literature, there is no consensus on its exact definition. In their review article, Martela and Pessi (2018) identified 36 different definitions of meaningful work. Additionally, in the article “A Review of the Empirical Literature on Meaningful Work: Progress and Research Agenda,” Bailey et al. (2019) highlighted several approaches to understanding “meaningfulness” that affect the definition of meaningful work. I will focus on four of these approaches that are particularly relevant to this literature review.

The first approach is “Meaningfulness derived from the job characteristics model” (Bailey et al., 2019, p. 88). According to Bailey, this approach relies on job characteristics to define and measure meaningful work. From this perspective, Kahn (1990) defined meaningfulness as “a feeling that one is receiving a return on investments in oneself in a currency of physical, cognitive, or emotional energy that arises from undertaking work that is worthwhile, useful, and valuable” (Bailey et al., 2019, p. 88). Or meaningfulness can be defined as “the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual’s own ideals or standards” (Spreitzer, 1995, p. 1443).

The second approach discussed is “Meaningfulness within the workplace spirituality literature” (Bailey et al., 2019, p. 90). Drawing on the work of several scholars (Ahmad & Omar, 2016; Albuquerque, et al., 2014), Bailey et al. (2019) suggest that organisations can promote human flourishing by creating an environment where individuals’ spiritual needs—such as the desire for an inner life, meaningful work, and community—can be fulfilled. From this perspective, meaningful work is defined not only as tasks that are cognitively engaging but also as work that fosters a sense of joy, connects workers to a larger purpose, and aligns with what the worker considers important in life (Duchon & Plowman, 2005, p. 814).

The third approach is referred to as “Meaningfulness within the Humanities Tradition” (Bailey et al., 2019, p. 90). According to this perspective, the quest for meaningfulness is inherent to being human: “it is a condition of being human to make meaning,” rather than something that can be provided by an organisation, its leaders, or job design initiatives (Lips-Wiersma & Morris, 2009, pp. 503–504). From this viewpoint, meaningful work consists of objective features that promote autonomy, freedom, and social recognition while also being subjectively experienced as meaningful by the individual (Wolf, 2010; Yeoman, 2014, cited in Bailey et al., 2019, p. 91). Additionally, Schnell, Höge and Pollet (2013, p. 548) highlight a second understanding of meaningful work within the humanities tradition. They describe it as “fulfilling, significant, directed, coherent with life goals, and contributing to a sense of belonging” (cited in Bailey et al., 2019, p. 91).

The fourth approach is described as “meaningfulness as a multifaceted eudaimonic psychological state.” This approach is primarily applied in quantitative research that measures meaningful work through various facets, typically ranging from three to ten aspects. Scholars such as Steger et al. (2012) and (2013) argue that

“meaningful work is a eudaimonic psychological state comprising three facets: the subjective sense of positive meaning individuals derive from their work, the connection between meaningfulness in work and the individual’s broader life, and the desire to make a positive impact or contribute to the greater good” (cited in Bailey et al., 2019, p. 91).

According to Bailey, the evaluation of work as meaningful refers to individuals’ judgement that their work is significant, worthwhile, and holds positive meaning (Bailey et al., 2019, p. 91).



In summary, there is no consensus on the definition of “meaningful work.” Tyssedal (2023) has proposed a distinction between situations where the work itself is meaningful and those where individuals find meaning from other sources at work. He argues that the term “meaningful work” should only apply to those cases where the work itself holds intrinsic value. This review takes a broader approach to defining meaningful work, encompassing any work that offers a sense of accomplishment and purpose.

The notion of dignified and fulfilling work

The concept of dignified and fulfilling work is broad and complex because of its elasticity. The meaning of dignity and fulfilment may vary from one culture to another or even from one person to another. However, work, as a daily occupation, is one important means by which man can enjoy his dignity and flourish.

From this perspective, *ATT Quart Monde*, a recognised worldwide association for its advocacy for dignified and fulfilling work, states:

“Dignified work empowers people and allows them to exercise control over their income. The income security that comes from social protection allows them to plan for their future with confidence. In addition, the dignity of work respects the worker without discrimination (no hierarchy of jobs or formal qualifications), thus considering work as a ‘bearer of humanity’” (*ATT Quart Monde*, 2023).

Some authors emphasise dignity when describing a job as dignified and fulfilling. For example, Gilabert (2018) qualifies dignified work as work that respects human dignity through respect for labour rights and the fulfilling nature of work. From the perspective proposed by Gilabert, the definition of dignified and fulfilling work leads to the analysis of the individual’s working conditions to know whether human dignity is respected through these working conditions. Thus, a dignified and fulfilling job is a job that allows the value of the individual in his or her entirety. In concrete terms, this valuation is reflected in the ability of the job to meet the employee’s primary needs, in the employee’s social fulfilment in the workplace, in his or her personal development, the feeling of contributing to society through his or her work, or the feeling of being an added value, as well as the sense of feeling respected in the social environment, the development of self-esteem through one’s work, the feeling that the job performed respects the principles of justice and equity, etc. These elements are not an exhaustive list of what should be included in a dignified and fulfilling work, but are only a list of elements among many others.

A dignified and fulfilling job is a job that allows the value of the individual in his or her entirety.

In the same line of thought, Marvel and Cox (2017) define the notion of dignified and fulfilling work as work that brings general well-being to the individual and whose conditions of exercise must not harm him/her physically, morally, or socially. Marvel and Cox (2017) thus provide an additional criterion for determining a dignified and fulfilling job by insisting on adapting work to the individual. This would require considering the individual’s well-being and his or her physical or moral potential in the work to be accomplished. For example, it would be degrading and immoral to ask a visually impaired person (who can barely see 15%) to monitor recordings from security cameras. One could pretend that by offering him this job, individual working conditions will improve since she is now employed. However, since the task given does not correspond to this individual’s abilities, this job could even further damage the health of his eyes. This is why adapting the job to the individual is essential to ensure the dignified and fulfilling nature of the work (Marvel & Cox, 2017, p. 16).

Other authors, such as Blustein and Allan (2024), define the notion of dignified and fulfilling work in terms of respect for social justice. This social justice includes elements relating to non-discrimination, equal rights, equitable remuneration, and the capacity of individuals to act in the social environment of the work. According to Blustein and Allan, respect for fairness and justice ensures the humane and fair nature of working conditions and the potential opportunities and personal development that come from that work. This ultimately makes it possible to qualify work as dignified and fulfilling (Blustein & Allan, 2024, pp. 10–11). These definitions are consistent with those provided by Mastercard Foundation (2025).

04

CONTEXT OF YOUTH
EMPLOYMENT AND THE
NON-PROFIT SECTOR IN
BURKINA FASO



Current context in Burkina Faso affecting youth employment and economic livelihoods

Burkina Faso is a landlocked country located in the Sahel region, near the bend of the Niger River. It has a tropical Sudano-Sahelian climate characterised by low average annual rainfall, which is short in duration and unevenly distributed across the country (Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie [INSD], 2022). These geographical and meteorological conditions negatively affect the country's economy, especially agriculture and trade, which in turn adversely impact youth employment.

At the socio-demographic level, the results of the Fifth General Population and Housing Census (RGPH) conducted in Burkina Faso in 2019 reveal a total population of 20,505,155 inhabitants (INSD, 2019). The distribution of the population by place of residence shows significant disparities in land use. The majority of Burkina Faso's population lives in rural areas, totalling 15,145,043 inhabitants, which represents 75% of the overall population. Regionally, the number of women exceeds that of men in both urban and rural areas, except in the Sahel region, where there is a higher male population in rural areas (INSD, 2019). In 2019, young people aged 15–34 accounted for 32.6% of the population, a slight increase from 32% in 2006. The youth demographic in Burkina Faso is predominantly rural, with seven out of ten young people living in rural areas, and there is a female majority among them at 54.2%, according to the INSD (2019).

In Burkina Faso, the law stipulates that the minimum age for admission to any employment is 15 years, as outlined in the Labour Code (2004, Article 147). The law also establishes guidelines on the types of work and categories of enterprises that are prohibited for "children," defined as individuals under 18 years of age. This aligns with the International Labour Organisation, which also sets the minimum age for employment at 15 years, allowing for adjustments based on specific legal or socio-economic contexts (International Labour Organisation, Convention No. 138).

Burkina Faso's security situation is significantly affected by the ongoing climate of insecurity in the West African sub-region. The rise in terrorist attacks and the resurgence of organised crime illustrate the increasing insecurity in the country, which poses a threat to its development (INSD, 2022). As a result, economic activities in Burkina Faso have been conducted in an environment marked by insecurity and political instability, negatively impacting the country's economic performance (INSD, 2022), including youth employment. According to the UNDP's 2021–2022 Human Development Index (HDI) report, Burkina Faso is ranked 196th out of 203 countries, with an HDI value of 0.45 (UNDP, 2022).

In this socio-demographic, economic, and security context, the challenges faced by young people in accessing dignified and fulfilling employment in the country differ significantly. The first challenge is providing training for young people. Several studies have indicated that school enrolment rates in Burkina Faso are declining. (World Bank, 2025). According to the 2009 Comprehensive Survey on the Living Conditions of Burkinabe Households (INSD, 2014), only 4.5% of the population aged 16–64 received technical and vocational education and training. Even among those who received training, many young people are not employable due to a mismatch between their education and the labour market's needs (Darankoum, 2014). This issue arises from an education system that has historically favoured traditional general education while marginalising vocational training. As a result, many young people lack adequate training and those who do hold diplomas often find that their qualifications do not align with market demands (Darankoum, 2014).

Even among those who received training, many young people are not employable due to a mismatch between their education and the labour market's needs (Darankoum, 2014).

Another challenge is the inability to promote economic sectors that can create job opportunities for young people (Darankoum, 2014). The country's economy relies heavily on a few sectors such as cash crops (like cotton and peanuts) and gold production. The country has a low industrial base, which in turn contributes to limited employment opportunities. The agricultural sector, which employs nearly 80% of the workforce, relies on traditional methods of production. Additionally, this sector is negatively impacted by climate change. An environment with a limited number of enterprises or industries cannot fully engage young people in the workforce (Darankoum, 2014).

Context of the non-profit sector in Burkina Faso

Over the years, Burkina Faso has experienced a significant increase in the number of NGOs. This rise has led some

scholars to refer to the country as a “country of NGOs,” a term often used by international observers in contrast to the phrase “country of honest men” (Enée, 2010). The NPOs in Burkina Faso include NGOs, local associations, twinning programmes, and village groups (Enée, 2010).

The droughts of 1973 and 1974 significantly impacted the entire Sahel region, leading to an increase in the presence of NGOs in Burkina Faso. During this emergency period, there was a notable collaboration between the Voltaic administration and both foreign and national NGOs. These organisations helped address several shortcomings of the state, which supported their efforts positively. The government provided facilities for NGOs, viewing this influx of assistance as a beneficial opportunity (Enée, 2007).

In light of the severity of the situation and the limited resources available to the country, these private organisations intensified their commitments and accelerated their initiatives. The number of NGOs rose dramatically from 17 in 1973 to 73 by 1980. More than 44% of the 129 NGOs operating in the early 1990s were established during the 1980s (Piveteau, 1998, pp. 192–193). According to the NGO Monitoring Directorate, the number of NGOs grew from 273 in 2000 to 353 in 2003, and further increased to 620 by early 2010—an overall growth of nearly 127%. While the number of NGOs has been steadily rising over the years, the overall presence of associations in the country continues to expand as well (Ministry of the Economy, Finance and Forecasting, 2023).

CSOs in Burkina Faso are organised within a dense and relatively long-standing network of associations, farmers’ federations, village groups, and various grassroots organisations. Approximately 6,000 associations and 12,000 pre-cooperative and cooperative village groups are registered in the country (Enée, 2007). These groups are formed at multiple spatial scales, originating from diverse backgrounds and addressing numerous developmental challenges. They often engage in exchanges among individuals and may work in complementary or competitive ways (Lavigne, 1992). The increasing growth rate of NGOs and other associations since the 1980s reflects the attraction of a new institutional environment characterised by political openness to private aid operators. In 1984, the government established the Directorate for the Monitoring of NGOs, which later transformed into the Directorate General of Cooperation to centralise and support NGO initiatives (Lavigne, 1992). Currently, Burkina Faso does not have the highest number of NGOs in Africa; countries like Mali and Madagascar have more NGOs (Lavigne, 1992). However, the density and variety of NPOs involved in development work in Burkina Faso are particularly significant, especially when examining their numbers per province and the multiplicity of their programmes.

The above notwithstanding, there is a notable lack of scientific and academic work on the associative sector in Burkina Faso compared to the extensive inventories, assessments, and studies conducted in Mali (Raghavan, 1992), Madagascar (Droy, 1998), and Congo-Brazzaville (Dorier-Appril, 1998). For instance, according to the Ministry of Interior of Burkina Faso, there is no specific registry for non-profit associations. Consequently, it is challenging to determine the exact number of NPOs that are legally registered in the country.



05

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR TO YOUTH EMPLOYMENT



Economic Contribution of the Non-Profit Sector to Youth Employment

Assessing the economic contributions of the non-profit sector to youth employment in Burkina Faso is challenging due to a lack of available data. While some qualitative studies have produced detailed reports on the impact of specific NPOs on economic development in the country, these findings cannot be generalised to represent the entire non-profit sector.

In his dissertation titled “The Dynamics of NGOs in Burkina Faso: Effectiveness in Question,” Gregory Enée (2007) highlighted how the severe economic situation, including the high poverty rates, led to the establishment of numerous NPOs, particularly NGOs. These NGOs implement various programmes and projects aimed at alleviating the suffering of the population. Enée noted that NPOs are involved in nearly every sector, including education, health, vocational training for job creation, and agriculture. Given this involvement, it can be argued that NPOs contribute to economic growth, although quantifying their contributions remains a challenge.

Enée is critical of the role and economic contributions of these NGOs, as the socio-economic situation has not improved despite their efforts and numerous programmes over the years. Additionally, when it comes to job creation, Enée observes that local NGOs often provide precarious employment for youth. He states, “Members of all local NGOs are, in principle, volunteers.” The funding received is primarily directed toward project execution, the operation of headquarters, and tangible achievements. Per diems are also allocated to members during field trips, which helps encourage an increasing number of individuals to pursue careers in this field (Enée, 2007, p. 116). Nonetheless, given the scarcity of job opportunities, particularly in rural areas, local NGOs offer hope for social advancement and greater legitimacy and sometimes even serve as a springboard to more formal employment.

In their conference paper titled “Reaching the Bottom of the Pyramid with a Social Enterprise Model: The Case of the NGO Entrepreneurs du Monde and Its Social Enterprise Nafa Naana in Burkina Faso,” Dumalanède and Payaud (2020) demonstrated how the NGO Entrepreneurs du Monde established an incubator by partnering with local suppliers, producers, and distributors. This collaboration enabled them to access the financial resources necessary for sustainability. Additionally, the incubator is generating jobs for underprivileged youth by providing professional training and financial assistance to help them start their own businesses. This model is typical of many local NGOs focused on creating employment opportunities for young people. However, we currently lack statistical data to evaluate the quality and significance of the jobs created by these organisations.



Another example of a local NPO creating youth employment in Burkina Faso is CREDO (Christian Relief and Development Organization). In partnership with IIEP-UNESCO Dakar, CREDO is making a significant contribution to youth employment in the country (UNESCO, 2023). Through its project in the Bobo-Dioulasso region, CREDO provides education and specialised training to disadvantaged young people, promoting their integration into the labour market and encouraging them to become autonomous and responsible individuals. Part of CREDO's mission focuses on creating employment opportunities for youth. It has established a network of vocational training centres that cater to various sectors, including agriculture, livestock, and recycling. CREDO closely collaborates with a network of 150 local companies and has developed the Employment Placement and Business Development Service (SPEDE) to facilitate the professional integration of trained young people. SPEDE is noted for its innovative approach, which includes a business immersion service, mediation for employment and internships, and business creation and development support. This comprehensive system guides young learners in their career paths, including psychotechnical assessments and partnerships with local companies. In 2020, the SPEDE service supported 933 learners, comprising 53 individuals from long-term technical training, 120 learners engaged in work-study training, and 760 participants in short-term training courses. In that year, CREDO facilitated 373 job placements for young people, encompassing both employment opportunities and support for those seeking self-employment (see UNESCO, 2023).

Christian Relief and Development Organization (CREDO) has established a network of vocational training centres that cater to various sectors, including agriculture, livestock, and recycling.

The Ministry of Economy and Finance publishes an annual report titled "Report on the Contribution of Non-Governmental Organisations, Development Associations (NGO/AD), and Foundations to the Development of Burkina Faso." This informative report offers insights into the contributions made by registered NGOs that collaborate with government agencies on development projects in Burkina Faso. However, the report does not disaggregate the data between NPOs and other types of organisations (see Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2022).

According to the Ministry of Economy and Finance, NPOs in Burkina Faso—including NGOs, development associations, and foundations—invested 215.04 billion FCFA in 2022 (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2023, p. 1). However, the report does not provide a detailed breakdown of the financial contributions made by national NGOs and development associations. It is noted that "the interventions of NGOs, development associations, and foundations, in the context of achieving development objectives, impact all socio-economic sectors, including education, health, agriculture and livestock, human rights advocacy, the environment, as well as water and sanitation" (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2023, p. 20).

Regarding employment, the Ministry states that "the staff employed by NGOs, ADs, and Foundations for the implementation of their development programmes consists of expatriate and national employees, as well as volunteers. In 2022, a total of 14,890 national employees were hired, and 1,182 volunteers" (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2023, p. 21).

Tables 1 and 2 do not provide information regarding the number of people employed by domestic NGOs and ADs that are partnering with the Ministry of Economy and Finance, nor do they indicate the number of young people employed by these organisations.

TABLE 1: Typology of NGOs/ADs and Foundations having signed establishment agreements with the Ministry of Economy and Finance

Type	Number	Percentage (%)
Foreign	336	87.27
National	49	12.73
Total	385	100

Source: MEFP/DGCOOP/DP-ONG, September 2023, p. 18.

TABLE 2: Situation of NGO/AD and Foundation staff in 2022

2022	Nationals				Expatriates				Volunteers			
	Full time		Part-time		Full time		Part-time		Nationals		Expatriates	
Sex	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Sub-total	7,069	4,668	1,838	1,315	282	157	11	15	521	555	53	52
Total	11,737		3,153		439		26		1,076		105	

Source: MEFP/DGCOOP/DP-ONG, September 2023, p. 22.

The “Directory of Burkinabè Associations” serves as a valuable source of information regarding the economic contribution of the non-profit sector to employment, though it does not specifically address youth employment. This directory consists of a voluntary registration of NPOs. As of now, only 364 associations are registered. Among these, 170 associations employ fewer than 10 individuals, 131 employ between 10 and 50 individuals, 30 employ between 50 and 100 individuals, another 30 employ between 100 and 500 individuals, and three employ more than 500 individuals (see Table 3).

TABLE 3: Number of workers (employees and volunteers)

Number of workers	Total	Percentage (%)
Less than 10 workers	170	47
Between 10 and 50 workers	131	36
Between 50 and 100 workers	30	8
Between 100 and 500 workers	30	8
More than 500 workers	3	1
Total	364	100

Source: Annuaire des Associations Burkinabè (<https://asso.bf/annuaire/>).

Although Table 3 does not provide data on the number of young people employed by the 364 NPOs listed, it indicates that nearly half of them employ fewer than 10 workers, while 36% employ between 10 and 50 workers. This employment pattern may reflect the overall employment trends in the non-profit sector. While we lack specific information about the number of young people working in these organisations, it is evident that a significant portion of both volunteers and employees in the non-profit sector are young individuals. Further research is needed to evaluate the economic contributions of the non-profit sector to youth employment.





06

THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION
OF THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR
TO DIGNIFIED AND FULFILLING
WORK FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN
BURKINA FASO

Dignified and fulfilling work has not been clearly defined in the context of Burkina Faso. Furthermore, there is a lack of specific data regarding the economic contribution of the non-profit sector in providing dignified and fulfilling work and opportunities for young people in the country. However, the few existing studies that discuss young people working in the non-profit sector express significant concerns about working conditions. Typically, this sector includes three main types of workers.

The first category of workers consists of volunteers. Most NPOs rely on volunteers to implement their programmes and projects. The majority of volunteers do not receive a monthly salary or honorarium. While some NPOs may offer compensation for transportation costs, most of their financial resources are focused on project implementation. In this context, volunteering often lacks sustainability and does not provide young people with a sense of accomplishment or purpose.

The second type of workers in the non-profit sector are monthly employees. Although they receive a monthly salary, these salaries are typically low. This leads to high mobility within the sector and a high turnover rate to other sectors, as many employees search for better compensation elsewhere. For many young graduates, working in an NPO serves as a transitional phase while they look for a “real job” that offers adequate financial support and a retirement pension (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2022).

The third category of workers in the non-profit sector is consultants. This group consists of well-educated individuals, possesses relevant experience, and are experts in their fields. These consultants are typically well-compensated, drive big cars, and are responsible for implementing and evaluating projects. They work under optimal conditions, and it is fair to say that they often experience dignified and fulfilling work (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2022).

There is currently no statistical data available to quantify the number of young people employed in various job categories within the non-profit sector. However, it can be argued that these young individuals, who constitute the majority of volunteers and staff of NPOs, are dissatisfied with their working conditions. Furthermore, these positions often do not lead to fulfilling lives. The government of Burkina Faso has expressed concern over the significant number of disputes reported by the labour inspectorate between NPOs and their employees. According to the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Burkina Faso, “NGOs, associations, and foundations contribute to creating jobs for Burkinabè people despite the challenging context. However, it should be noted that disputes are frequently brought before the labour inspectorate regarding dismissals, which are sometimes described as unfair” (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2023, p. 21).

It can be argued that these young individuals, who constitute the majority of volunteers and staff of NPOs, are dissatisfied with their working conditions.

Several NPOs, such as CREDO, focus on socio-professional training and integration, especially for disadvantaged young people. While trade training often leads to precarious jobs that help young people survive, it does not enable them to escape poverty. Typically, these NPOs train artisans or small business owners for the job market. In rare instances, they also provide training for highly skilled and educated individuals who can access dignified and fulfilling work.

Thus, even without statistical data, it can be argued that NPOs contribute to creating employment opportunities for young people. However, most of these are neither dignified nor fulfilling. In fact, most jobs in the country do not meet the criteria of this concept. Indeed, as the ILO states in its report on the “Country Programme for the Promotion of Decent Work in Burkina Faso 2020–2022”:

A significant proportion of the employed workforce is in precarious jobs. The vulnerable employment rate equals 89.7% for the entire employed workforce. Around 52% of vulnerable jobs are unpaid jobs. The employment wage rate is low and equal to 10.3%. The proportion of employers represents only 0.4% of total employment. The vulnerable employment rate is 93.8% among employed women, compared to 84.9% among employed men and 89.2% among employed young people. Thus, the salary rate is 6% for women, compared to 14.5% for men. Among young people and women, unpaid jobs represent around 65% of total vulnerable jobs, compared to 38% among men (ILO, 2021, p. 10).

In conclusion, even if NPOs contribute to creating dignified and fulfilling jobs for young people, their contribution is minimal.



07

THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR'S
SUB-SECTORAL CONTRIBUTIONS
TO DIGNIFIED AND FULFILLING
WORK FOR VARIOUS
CATEGORIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

The non-profit sector primarily creates jobs for three main groups of young people: marginalised youth, rural youth, and recent graduates—the subjects of this section. While many of these jobs may not be seen as dignified or fulfilling, they provide young people with a means to escape unemployment, meet some of their basic needs, and ultimately improve their living conditions to some extent.

Creating jobs for marginalised youth

Several NPOs have launched initiatives to promote employment and professional training for disadvantaged young people. One notable example is the NGO “Burkina Initiatives,” which has become a key player in job creation through its “Youth for Employment” programme. This initiative aims to address youth unemployment by offering a comprehensive approach that combines vocational training, entrepreneurship promotion, and personalised support. The programme offers vocational training tailored to meet the demands of today’s labour market. This enables underprivileged young participants to acquire skills that employers seek, thereby enhancing their employability (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2022). A vital aspect of the programme is the encouragement of entrepreneurship. Young people are motivated to explore and establish their own businesses, which creates new economic opportunities. Burkina Initiatives provides financial support, management consulting, and the necessary resources to help young entrepreneurs bring their ideas to life (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2022).

The success of the programme is largely attributed to its individualised approach. Each participant receives personalised follow-up, which includes professional advice, mentoring sessions, and continuous support in their career development. This customised approach enhances the chances of success for young people in the job market and in entrepreneurship (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2022). Like “Burkina Initiatives,” several other NGOs and CSOs offer youth professional training and entrepreneurship opportunities, enabling them to escape poverty and unemployment. As noted earlier in this review, most of these jobs are for artisans and are poorly paid.

Unfortunately, there is no statistical data to assess the number of young people benefitting from these job creations for disadvantaged young people or the quality of the jobs created to determine whether they are dignified and fulfilling. A study is needed to fill this gap.

Creating jobs for rural youth

Rural youth are a primary focus for NPOs that invest in professional training and job creation. According to the Ministry of the Economy and Finance’s “2022 Report on the Contributions of NGOs, Development Agencies, and Foundations to the Development of Burkina Faso,” several NPOs initiated programmes to promote employment and vocational training for young people in rural areas from 2017 to 2021 (OIT, 2021). One example is the NGO APME2A (Agence pour la Promotion de la Petite et Moyenne Entreprise/Agriculture et Artisanat), which established around ten service companies and producer organisations, engaging 4,252 young producers in the agricultural sector.

The “Association d’Appui et de Promotion Rurale du Gulmu” (APRG) collaborates with farmers’ groups and associations to promote self-reliance through various initiatives. These include training, providing credit, supporting small businesses, and implementing projects in rural areas. As a result, young people are empowered to either start their own businesses or secure employment (Ouédraogo et al., 2022).

There are several NPOs in the country that create job opportunities for young people in rural areas. However, there is a lack of information on how dignified and fulfilling these jobs are, as well as how many young people actually benefit from them. Conducting a rigorous study could provide reliable statistics on this issue.

Creating jobs for young graduates

The typical job search path for young graduates after completing their studies often begins with volunteering for NPOs. They aim to establish networks in hopes of securing paid positions. After gaining some experience, many young graduates tend to apply for more lucrative jobs outside the non-profit sector (Akouwetabou et al., 2021). Consequently, positions in the voluntary sector are viewed as temporary; they may not always be seen as fulfilling or dignified by young graduates. However, a minority of young graduates who secure roles as consultants in the non-profit sector may enjoy high salaries and societal respect, making their jobs dignified and fulfilling (Haefliger, 2017). Furthermore, individuals in leadership roles within NPOs, especially NGOs, generally receive competitive salaries and benefit from improved working conditions.



08

POSSIBILITIES AND
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR INCREASED
EMPLOYMENT IN THE
NON-PROFIT SECTOR

According to the “2022 Report on the Contribution of NGOs, ADs, and Foundations to the Development of Burkina Faso” (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2022), which includes both national and international NPOs, future job opportunities are expected to be in the health, agricultural, silver, pastoral production, and education and training sectors.

The education sector: According to a government report, the efforts of NPOs in the education and training sector have significantly impacted the lives of many individuals between 2017 and 2021. The construction of 237 schools and 932 classrooms improved learning environments. Literacy programmes provided by NPOs benefitted 43,027 learners, and the 949 literacy centres established served as vital catalysts for the empowerment of young individuals (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2022). As a demonstration of their commitment, NPOs sponsored the education of 429,047 students and trained 34,071 teachers, enhancing the quality of education. Additionally, the focus on vocational training for 20,575 young people opened employment opportunities and strengthened the skills necessary for a fulfilling career (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2022). Overall, the education sector presents opportunities for economic investment and job creation for young people. Although these figures include contributions from foreign NPOs, it is hoped that local NPOs have also made significant contributions to the education sector, particularly in creating dignified and fulfilling jobs and opportunities.

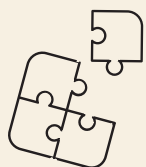
The health sector is a key area where NPOs can help create dignified and fulfilling jobs for young people. According to a 2022 government report, NPOs constructed 61 Health and Social Promotion Centres and 23 medical units between 2017 and 2021, thereby effectively expanding access to health services in critical regions. Additionally, they trained 184,946 young health workers, thereby enhancing the capacity of medical staff and improving the quality of healthcare, and simultaneously creating employment opportunities for recent graduates (INSD, 2022). Given the state’s limited economic resources, prioritising health services should be a focus for NPOs, ultimately contributing to job creation for young people.

The agro-sylvo-pastoral production sector is one of the key areas where NPOs can play a significant role in creating jobs for young people. According to the 2018 *Harmonized Survey on Household Living Conditions*, NPOs have constructed 7,594 manure pits, developed 25,987 hectares of arable land, and trained 387,998 young producers, along with 5,015 farmer cooperatives (INSD, 2022). Furthermore, the establishment of 912 livestock units and the distribution of livestock to 1,739 young individuals by these organisations not only contributed to food security but also improved the livelihoods of rural populations. Additionally, the creation of 5,009 market gardening and pastoral water points enhanced irrigation capacity and supported community resilience in the face of climate change. All these initiatives contributed to the vocational training of young men and women while also creating job opportunities for these communities (INSD, 2022). Like the health sector, the agro-sylvo-pastoral production sector should be a priority for NPOs seeking to invest and create employment for young people. There are two main reasons for this: first, youth in rural areas face limited job opportunities, leading many to migrate to urban areas in search of work. Second, the State has limited economic resources to invest in rural areas and create employment for these populations.

The literature review suggests that the sectors mentioned above hold promise for creating jobs, which could lead to increased employment opportunities for young people in the country in the future. However, NPOs encounter several challenges in achieving sustainable job creation. Burkina Faso’s National Observatory of Employment and Training has provided a critical overview of the obstacles faced by NPOs in creating jobs for young people (INSD, 2022). Some of these challenges include:

- *Lack of sustainable funding:* NPOs rely on external funding, which, in some cases, is short term, depending on the priority of the donors. Lack of stable funding jeopardises the continuity of youth employment programs.
- *Coordination with other actors:* Coordination between NPOs, the government, and other stakeholders can be complex. Overlaps or gaps in interventions reduce the effectiveness and impact of youth employment programmes.
- *Inadequacy to labour market needs:* Some NPO programmes may not align with the current and future labour market needs, limiting the employability of trained young people (INSD, 2022).
- *Tax pressure:* The tax burden significantly affects young entrepreneurs, often leading to the failure or abandonment of youth-led businesses. Consequently, many start-ups are compelled to operate in the informal sector due to high taxes. However, it is essential to acknowledge that specific tax incentives are available for new businesses, and small businesses can benefit from reduced tax rates.

Due to the limited economic resources of Burkina Faso, one of the poorest countries in the world, the non-profit sector will continue to play a crucial role in creating youth employment and reducing poverty.






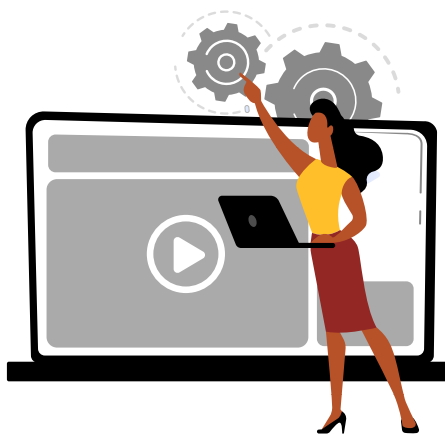
09

KNOWLEDGE GAPS
WITHIN THE NON-PROFIT
SECTOR TO PROVIDE
DIGNIFIED AND FULFILLING
WORK FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The review indicates that the non-profit sector in Burkina Faso offers employment opportunities for young people, a fact acknowledged by the government. In its “2022 Report on the Contribution of NGOs and Foundations to the Development of Burkina Faso,” the government highlighted the significant role that NPOs play in promoting youth employment in the country (Ministry of the Economy, Finance, and Forecasting, 2022). This literature review presents several examples of NPOs that have hired young people as volunteers, employees, or consultants. Additionally, these organisations provide professional training for young people, enhancing their chances of securing employment. However, there are considerable knowledge gaps in the existing studies, some of which are discussed below.

- 
- First, the absence of a precise mapping of NPOs. Existing studies have not quantified the number of registered or unregistered NPOs in the country. Partly because of this, the number of local and foreign NPOs operating in Burkina Faso is unclear. The review, however, reveals that there is more information and data available on foreign NPOs than on local ones.
 - Second, the number of jobs created by the non-profit sector, particularly by local NPOs, is not known.
 - Third, existing studies have not specified the locations or sectors in which NPOs create more jobs for young Burkinabé.
 - Fourth, the existing literature does not provide a clear profile of young people working in the local non-profit sector, nor does it quantify the jobs available to various categories of youth, particularly those who are marginalised.
 - Finally, there is limited information available to assess the quality of jobs created by the non-profit sector. As a result, it is challenging to determine whether employment by NPOs is dignified and fulfilling. The review indicates that there is high staff mobility among NPOs, with employees frequently moving between jobs within the sector and to other sectors in search of better working conditions. Given this situation, it can be concluded that the jobs created by non-profits are often precarious and do not meet the standards of being dignified and fulfilling.

Future studies are needed to determine the number of NPOs in the country, the job opportunities they generate and create, and to evaluate the quality of those jobs for the youth.



10 CONCLUSION



This review highlights the non-profit sector's role in Burkina Faso's economy, especially in creating dignified and fulfilling jobs for young people, which is a necessary condition for inclusive development in the country, as elsewhere.

NPOs support the development of young people's skills and capacities through educational programmes, vocational training, and entrepreneurial initiatives. This preparation enables them to engage constructively in the labour market. By emphasising human dignity, NPOs promote the economic empowerment of young people, which contributes to poverty reduction and improved living conditions.

The holistic approach of the non-profit sector incorporates education, training, career guidance, and business development, all of which contribute to a supportive environment for young people's growth. Collaborations with the private sector, government, and other key stakeholders will improve the effectiveness of these initiatives, ensuring a successful transition for young people into dignified and fulfilling employment.

Investing in youth is vital for economic growth and helps create more just, equitable, and inclusive societies. Providing dignified and fulfilling jobs for young people is not only an economic necessity but also essential for ensuring a promising and prosperous future for Burkina Faso. As a result, the non-profit sector is positioning itself as a key partner in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. This effort aims to create a future where Africa's youth are employed, fulfilled, and actively engaged in building a sustainable society.

Collaborations with the private sector, government, and other key stakeholders will improve the effectiveness of these initiatives.

There are significant knowledge gaps in the non-profit sector. The existing literature primarily focuses on foreign NPOs operating in Burkina Faso, rather than on domestic ones. Furthermore, there is no official registry specifically for domestic NPOs, which makes it difficult to accurately assess their number and evaluate their economic contributions to providing dignified and fulfilling work. To better understand the non-profit sector in Burkina Faso, including its impact on job creation and the quality of jobs offered to various groups of young people, qualitative and quantitative studies are required.



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