



Entrepreneurship Ecosystems and Innovation Hubs in Sierra Leone's East African Context

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship ecosystems and innovation hubs are crucial for fostering economic growth in developing countries like Sierra Leone. However, their development and impact vary significantly across different regions. The analysis employs a qualitative approach, drawing on secondary data from government reports, academic literature, and interviews with stakeholders. The focus is on understanding the existing landscape and potential areas for improvement. In Sierra Leone's East African context, there is a notable lack of formal innovation hubs despite some informal clusters emerging in urban centers like Freetown. Entrepreneurship networks are fragmented and often operate outside formal structures. The current ecosystem lacks cohesive support systems and funding mechanisms for entrepreneurs and innovators, highlighting the need for strategic policy initiatives to strengthen these areas. Policy recommendations include the establishment of a dedicated government body focused on entrepreneurship and innovation, alongside the development of targeted financial incentives and capacity-building programmes.

Keywords: *African urbanization, innovation hubs, microfinance, neoliberalism, participatory development, regional disparities, value chain analysis*

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