



Vocational Training in Renewable Energy Installation and Youth Employment Trajectories in Agbogbloshie, Accra

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ABSTRACT

Agbogbloshie is a densely populated informal settlement in Accra, known for its e-waste recycling economy. High youth unemployment persists despite various interventions, with limited research on the role of vocational training in emerging green sectors within such contexts. This study investigates how a specific vocational training programme in solar photovoltaic installation influences the employment pathways and perceived livelihoods of young participants in Agbogbloshie. A qualitative, longitudinal case study was employed. Data were collected via in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a purposively sampled cohort of programme graduates and key informant interviews with training providers and local employers. Thematic analysis was conducted using NVivo software. Training catalysed a significant shift from informal e-waste scavenging to formalised technical work for a majority of participants. A central theme was the acquisition of 'recognised skill', which enhanced social standing and bargaining power. However, a key barrier was the high upfront cost of toolkits required for independent work. Vocational training in renewable energy installation can facilitate a transition towards more stable, skilled employment for youth in informal settlements, but its efficacy is constrained by structural economic barriers beyond skill provision. Programme design must integrate seed funding or tool financing schemes. Policymakers should develop accreditation frameworks that recognise skills gained in informal settings to improve labour market mobility. youth employment, vocational education and training, renewable energy, informal settlements, Ghana, just transition This paper provides novel empirical evidence on the mechanisms linking green skills training to altered employment trajectories within a West African informal economy, highlighting the critical role of asset ownership.

Keywords: *Informal settlements, Youth unemployment, Vocational training, Renewable energy, Ghana, Sustainable livelihoods, Qualitative research*

Article Highlights

- Vocational training enabled a shift from informal scavenging to formal technical work.
- Acquiring 'recognised skill' enhanced social standing and labour market bargaining power.
- High upfront costs for toolkits remain a critical barrier to independent work.
- Programme efficacy is constrained by structural economic barriers beyond skill provision.

Policy Imperative

Accreditation frameworks must recognise skills gained in informal settings to improve labour market mobility for youth.

A longitudinal qualitative case study from a West African informal settlement.

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