

NEWSLETTER

Monday, 23rd June, 2025



LAUNCH

YOUTH ECONOMIC INCLUSION THROUGH NEXT GENERATION LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (NGLED)

On Monday, 23rd June, 2025, the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS), with support from the Knowledge Platform on Inclusive Development Policies (INCLUDE), proudly launched the Youth Economic Inclusion through Next-Generation Local Economic Development (NGLED), an action research project at the Institute's Conference Centre, Ogbojo, Accra.

The NGLED is a change in ideology and strategy by Local Governments (LGs) in support of economic activities beyond an enabling environment. The approach is based on the principles that it is the business of LGs to do business to create jobs and improve the income levels of the people.

A total of 106 people attended the programme. They were made up of representatives of various government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), especially the Sector Ministry (The Ministry of Local Government, Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, MLGCRA), Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), Development Partners (DPs), the youth groups, Traditional Authorities (TAs), the Media, the ILGS community, international organisations such as INCLUDE and members of the African Policy Dialogue from Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Mozambique, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria.



Prof. Nicholas Awortwi giving the welcome address

In his welcome address, Prof. Nicholas Awortwi, the Director of ILGS threw light on the genesis and rationale of the project, which is a policy action research that was being implemented in five LG

jurisdictions (districts) by five business youth groups to (a) analyse the entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial behaviours among young people and LG officials respectively when trained and facilitated to pursue productive economic activities; and (b) provide evidence towards adoption of a national programme on NGLED to create sustainable decent jobs and income growth for unemployed graduate youth. A 10-minute video documentary on the project followed his address to set the tone for the programme.

Representatives of organisations or bodies such as the Netherlands Embassy, Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralisation (IMCCoD), the Awutu Senya East Municipal Assembly and the Young Entrepreneurs (beneficiaries of the project) made encouraging and supportive remarks





Mr. Benjamin Akyeah, from EcoHoof Ranch indicated: “Just a year ago, many of us in this room were...ambitious, qualified, but unemployed. We held certificates in our hands and dreams in our hearts, yet opportunities remained out of reach. But today, we are business owners, entrepreneurs,

problem-solvers and contributors to our local economies....For me personally, through EcoHoof Ranch, we’ve launched a goat farming enterprise that’s now fully operational. It’s already starting to make a difference in our local economy. We’ve signed formal agreements with our district assembly. Our business is officially registered. We have an active bank account. That’s real transformation something you can see, measure, and build on.

What makes NGLED unique is not just the training or the funding it’s the mindset shift. This project is proving that local government can do business differently. That job creation is not only a national goal; it is a local responsibility. And that, when young people are given the right support and a little faith, we [will] rise not just for ourselves, but for our communities”.



Dr. Anika Altaf, the Executive Director of INCLUDE (Knowledge Platform on Inclusive Development Policies) in her remark introduced INCLUDE as an independent knowledge platform which is being funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2012.

According to her, most of the members on the INCLUDE platform were Africans who could leverage on their experiences and expertise to inform the strategic direction of the platform. She added that the Platform had three (3) important pillars, namely, research, knowledge exchange, and policy dialogue, and that one of the Platform’s core programs under policy dialogue is the African Policy Dialogue, hence the reason for the YEI-NGLED. She commended the policy makers present at the program for supporting the initiative on youth employment in Ghana. In concluding, she expressed her eagerness to learn more about next line of action to get this great initiative scaled up.



The Deputy Minister of MLGCRA, Hon. Rita Naa Odoley-Sowah, represented the Sector Minister, Hon. Ibrahim Ahmed (MP), as the guest of honour. She started her address by

indicating that the event marked a bold step toward addressing one of the most pressing challenges of youth unemployment, particularly among the educated young people. According to the Hon. Deputy Minister, the five youth-led business groups established across some districts in the country were not just pilot projects but proof that local governments can lead in job creation, enterprise development, and inclusive growth. She stated that the NGLED Project aligns seamlessly with the broader vision of His Excellency President John Dramani Mahama, particularly the Adwumawura Programme and the 24-Hour Economy Policy, the government’s flagship programmes that aim to create 10,000 youth-led businesses annually, establish a microcredit institution with a seed fund of GHS 750 million, promote graduate cooperatives for public and private businesses, and scale up district-level enterprises while supporting artisans with start-up kits. The Hon. Deputy Minister assured the gathering of the Ministry’s unflinching commitment to embedding job creation at the heart of local governance.

She officially launched the project and presented the business registration certificates to the youth groups, namely, Ecohoof Ranch, Fishhaven Farms, Aquayouth Harvesters, Big Mind Catfish Farm, and the Atiwa Youth Poultry.



It is worthy of note, that, alongside the presentations and discussions, there was a photo exhibition showcasing the achievement of the youth groups. Besides, the Big Mind Catfish Farm group from Nsawam Adoagyiri set up an exhibition stand to display smoked and fresh catfish for sale.



Dr, Jerome R. Awortwe-Abban, the Coordinator of the NGLED Project, made a presentation on the preliminary evidence gathered from the action research and how the evidence could inform government's policy on LED, youth enterprises and "Adwumawura", one of the current government's flagship programmes for addressing the unemployment and underemployment problems of the Ghanaian youth.

