Sub-Saharan Africa faces a paradox that has global relevance and implications: it will be home to the largest youth population in the world by 2050 and although literacy rates (by 6%) and education enrollment rates (by 9%) have been on the rise, youth unemployment continues to hover above 60% across the region. How will African youth create or secure sustainable and meaningful livelihoods? And more specifically, who is responsible for youth employment in Africa?

In partnership with the Fair Observer [1], we have explored the topic “Youth Employment in Africa: Whose Job Is It?” over the last 3 months. Insights from social innovators and thought leaders have made it increasingly apparent that childhood and educational experiences of young Africans do not
prepare them for the evolving workplace. How do we change this? It is clear that each of us have a role to play and that we need to move beyond silos in our approaches to this challenge. This will require all forces - the citizen, public, private and social sector - to come together to create long-term solutions.

With this in mind, we will be posing the closing question “What does successful cross-sector collaboration look like?” during the closing webinar and concurrent twitter chat for the Fair Observer series on September 17th: “Collaborating to Solve Youth Employment”.

JOIN THE COMMUNITY:

- Join the ongoing online conversation [7] on September 17th at 10am ET and beyond: Join us for the webinar and concurrent twitter chat conversation using the #AfricaYouthFwd [3] and #SocEntChat hashtags and by tuning in at this link: http://bit.ly/1mcrSiH [4]
- Contribute [5] your insights in articles which will be distributed to a large and relevant audience of changemakers. Email: mystory@changemakers.com [6].
- Upcoming - Check the community blog [7] for insights, conversations as well as updates about an upcoming youth employment innovations challenge where you can submit your solution.
- Catch up with the conversation so far via this storify [8]

FACILITATOR & PANELISTS:

Lynsey Farrell

Lynsey Farrell is a Senior Change Manager at Ashoka and Manages the Future Forward project. After college, Lynsey won a Fulbright student fellowship to Kenya where she was drawn to work with activists advocating for youth rights and political participation. Her doctoral dissertation (Boston University), entitled “Hustling NGOs: Coming of Age in Kenya’s Kibera Slum,” is based on seven years of ethnographic research with youth self-help organizations in Nairobi’s largest informal settlement. In East Africa she worked as a consultant on a range of strategic planning and capacity strengthening assignments and served as the director of American University’s program in sustainable development, also based in Nairobi. Twitter: @azlynsey [9]
Marlon Parker is a Social Entrepreneur who advocates for using Technology for Social Good. His passion for community development has influenced his work and led to being the founder of the Reconstructed Living Lab (RLabs), a global movement that is powered by technology. RLabs currently has activities in 21 countries. He has been listed as one of the 100 World Class South Africans in 2013, is an alumni of President Obama’s Young African Leaders initiative and was elected as an Ashoka Fellow in partnership with the MasterCard Foundation. During 2014 Marlon was also selected as a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader. He was the co-founder of JamiiX that was the backbone to one of the largest mobile chat counseling networks in the world with more than 3 million people being reached since its inception. Twitter: @MarlonParker [11]

Regina Agyare is the CEO of Soronko Solutions, a social enterprise that are experts in using mass technology to drive human potential. She runs Tech Needs Girls a mentorship program that teaches girls to code as a skill they can use to economically empower themselves and transform their communities. She was named one of the six women making an impact in Tech in Africa and one of 10 female entrepreneurs to watch in emerging economies. She was featured on CNN African Startups and interviewed by BBC World Service. She is an Aspen Institute New Voices Fellow, World Economic Forum Global Shaper, Vital Voices Fellow, Mandela Washington Fellow and Tigo Reach for Change Leader. Her story was published in the Lean In for Graduates by Sheryl Sandberg COO of Facebook was a finalist for the ITU African Digital Woman of the Year. She is on the advisory board on a project to amend the UN Rights of the Child to include Digital rights of a child. She has been invited to speak at, TedxLabone, TedxDartmouth, Symposium at Harvard University etc. She was awarded a Women of Courage Award for Technology and Tech Needs Girls was awarded in the Ghana CSR Diary Awards. Twitter: @ragyare [12].

Honorable Kenneth Okoth was elected as the Member of Parliament for Kibra constituency in Nairobi, Kenya in 2013. Previously he focused on comparative education as a teacher, professor and founder of the Children of Kibera Foundation which aims to create education and enrichment opportunities for the underprivileged in Kibera. Twitter: @okothkenneth [14]
Christine Taphel is the project manager and head of the Vangate Youth Cafe, a programme in partnership with R Labs and the Western Cape Department of Social Development. She holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology and Linguistics at the University of Western Cape as well as certificates in Effective People’s Management and Internet Technology from the University of Cape Town. She also have extensive experience in media where her passion for young people led her to join the Bush Radio Children’s Radio Education Crew.

Christine’s drive to see positive impact in the lives of youth and her community was one of the key reasons for joining R Labs in 2012. At R Labs she was responsible for the set up and project management of the GROW Leadership Academy where her team worked in partnership with development agencies, private and public sector partners. The GROW Leadership Academy under the leadership of Christine graduated more than 400 youth with more than 90% finding employment or becoming economically empowered and expanded to Tanzania in partnership with the Finnish Foreign Ministry. Her latest venture with R Labs, the Youth Cafe, is a first in Africa and have already proven to be a catalyst in creating learning and economic opportunities for youth in peri-urban and township communities in Cape Town. Twitter @ChristineTaphel [15].

Links
[6] mailto:mystory@changemakers.com  
[9] https://twitter.com/azlynsey  
[12] https://twitter.com/ragyare  
[14] https://twitter.com/okothkenneth  
[15] https://twitter.com/ChristineTaphel  
[18] https://www.changemakers.com/browse/development-prosperity/economic-development  
[22] https://www.changemakers.com/browse/development-prosperity/community-development  