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Is there a future in kyeyo jobs abroad? Publish Date: Jul 09, 2012

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By: George W. Ntambaazi

While presiding over a graduation ceremony at [Makerere University](#) in April 2005, former Chancellor Prof. Apolo Nsibambi said that during his post graduate studies in America in the 70s he did some odd jobs to supplement his small salary.

The core of his message was to encourage fresh graduates not to minimise jobs.

Many Ugandans continue to travel abroad with dreams of making it big from odd jobs particularly from various European countries, USA, Canada, and Japan.

The financial crisis in the West has made many turn focus of looking for earnings chances even elsewhere including the Middle, Far East and Pacific, Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Brazil and South Africa. This prompted the Government to open up missions and consular offices in these countries to improve ties.

The Government also created a Diaspora department under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to coordinate Diaspora activities and help Diasporas access relevant services. However, although some of these developed economies need labour to manage peaks in demand for their products and services, the labour and job markets are extremely tight.

The high unemployment and restless fight against poverty makes it odd to argue against kyeyo jobs abroad particularly for the million youth however harder or less desirable they may be. However, prospective kyeyo seekers need to have complete information about these jobs and respective country laws to make informed decisions.

First, although foreign remittances from odd jobs done by Ugandans in Diaspora have changed lives and are amongst the leading drivers of our economy, the money does not come easily due to stringent restrictions.

Second, the high skill segment, pressure and stress abroad is particularly challenging.

Third, job chances are limited given the skills and expertise needed, although there is labour shortage in some occupations and industries due to aging populations.

Many of our Diasporas work on contract basis for private employment agencies or firms. The contracts range from weeks to months and are subject to renewal based on satisfactory

performance.

However, these agencies have a bad reputation among trade unions and the general public. They exploit, overwork and underpay workers far below the stipulated market wages. The kind of work they offer is responsible for numerous health problems including burn-outs, trauma and depression.

There is plenty of evidence to prove that those who accept odd jobs do so in desperation because they do not have the requisite papers and skills to find permanent or regular positions. So odd jobs are precarious dead ends that actually lead to nowhere in terms of savings given the taxes one has to pay.

Apparently, in Germany, nationals completely shunned these jobs, and are mostly done by foreigners mainly from Turkey, Eastern Europe, Russia, Latin America and Africa.

I have thoroughly researched during my stay here and from experience it is clear to me that doing odd jobs abroad is a nightmare. If one has an opportunity to travel abroad, it is better to learn new skills and take them back home and contribute to our own development.

The despicable state of affairs, together with an almost total absence of favorable laws for immigrant workers should create much thoughtful thinking about the possible scenarios in which we can protect our people from this exploitation.

We should build on these scenarios to develop strategies for creation of concrete and sustainable employment programmes for our people and development of our country.

Otherwise, the grim reality abroad stands in sharp contrast to people's gigantic expectations about kyeyo jobs.

The Writer is temporarily based in Osnabruck – Germany



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Jovina

Why did u go and study in Germany,u are just a fake guy,for me in Germany am earning and don't discourage people to come and work for their families,if for u,u failed,don't think others will fail,every person has his luck mr

diddy

Jovina, I think you have totally misunderstood the essence of the article. Take time and read it carefully again. Personally I have a high paying job as a specialist but I do interact with my bretheren who do "kyeeyo jobs " for a living, but as said, it is out of desparation. If one had a chance, I would suggest that one gets the ideas, skills and education from the west and then implement them to our situation at home. If you ask me, well that is exactly what Im doing..not because Im desparate, but rather I see that ther is a window of opportunity to devlope my country while at the same time creating jobs and developement locally.

kary