

The Economic and Social Community for Career Seekers

Dear Friends,

In the recent series of articles on **Career Paths**, I indicated what options - degrees, qualifications, jobs - were possible for the different levels of graduates. In this article, I intend to speak a little about what all levels of **graduates expect** and the attainment of their ambitions and pursuits in life.

The views that are held by 80% of **all graduates**, from any of the schooling levels, is their *wish* to leave for '*the city*'. Their shared view is that in the city (bigger towns) are where their expectations and aspirations will be realized more than if they stayed in their own community. The remaining 20% will continue to live in and around their community to find menial jobs to do: farming, petty trading (females), engaging themselves in anything that will bring a penny or two into their pockets.

The migration into the cities and bigger towns is so serious that those towns and cities receiving these *migrants* are bursting at their seams. Some of the graduates, with only an elementary school level education, because they are not employed and have no means to rent accommodation of their own, end up being *squatters*, targets of robbery, prostitution, and other social vices. I have on occasion mentioned in other articles that these **squatters** are those who end up on the streets as **street children**, peddling in all kinds of wares on the roads, at the traffic lights. The **society** has no solutions to their problems, because as school dropouts, they become social misfits who sadly, often end up becoming addicts.

The Ghanaian **economy** also is such that the few jobs available are grossly inadequate for the masses of graduates that are job seeking. Unemployment is very high! Recently when the security services (military, police, etc.) advertised that they were accepting applications for only about *three thousand positions*, the lines that formed all over the nation - at designated centers - according to media reports were in the excess of *twenty thousand potential applicants*.

To minimize the impact of this joblessness on the overall society, the government has intensified its efforts to encourage as many of them as possible to be retrained, or move into a new field. We hope and pray for the best.

Their (home) village conditions are the reasons why many of the graduates wish to leave. The jobs are hard to find where they can get paid decent wages/salaries and the living conditions are so dire and hopeless that they don't want to go through what their parents are going through. The contrast of what they 'perceive & know' as pertaining to the bigger towns, against the place they have lived and graduated from, create a strong urge for them to move to those bigger towns to "enjoy" life. The question is: what do they expect to find in the big towns? Their expectations are built on **dreams** that they have had that they wish to be fulfilled. Dreams that they will get good paying jobs so they can send financial help to their parents who are still struggling to eek out a living from the now almost infertile land, the **same** land they have farmed on all their lives.

The viciousness of the living conditions are always before me as I watch the little children come to school; hungry & tired, as if there is little good for them in the future. They come to school because school serves as a break in the monotonous life. Our Akrampa Breakfast Program continues to be a main source of food for many of the children. And it continues to be a draw to our Akrampa School, because none of the other schools in the region are feeding their students. This is an encouragement to come to school and learn, when many of these kids would otherwise be very discouraged. This is also why the Ghana Mission feeds all of the students, from Kindergarten through the 9th Grade Junior High, in Akrampa. The longer the students remain in school, the better their chances are of moving on to High School. The higher the level of their education, the more job and life opportunities are available to help them have a more successful life.

Pastor Ben Wilson