

Advancing entrepreneurship, innovation: NEIP creates 103,871 jobs ... from 2017 to 2023 —President

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PRESIDENT Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has lauded the transformative impact of the National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (NEIP) on Ghana's entrepreneurship landscape. Speaking at the 3rd Applied Research Conference of Technical Universities in Ghana (ARCTUG 2024) in Sunyani, the President

detailed the successes of NEIP and its contributions to reducing youth unemployment and stimulating economic growth.

Launched in 2017, NEIP has been a cornerstone initiative aimed at advancing entrepreneurship and innovation in Ghana. The programme provides critical support to start-ups through funding, training, and mentorship.

President Akufo-Addo noted that NEIP has significantly impacted Ghana's start-up ecosystem, leading to the emergence of numerous innovative businesses across various sectors.

"By offering financial support and business development services, NEIP has enabled 15,000 start-ups to scale up their operations," President Akufo-Addo stated.

He highlighted that the programme had contributed to the creation of 103,871 jobs as of the end of 2023, fostering economic diversification and empowering the youth.

The President paid tribute to the foundational work of the late John Kumah, the first CEO of NEIP, and the former Minister for Business Development, Moham-

med Awal Ibrahim, for their roles in establishing the programme.

He emphasized that NEIP's success in producing entrepreneurial talent has not only generated thousands of jobs but also positioned Ghana as a hub for innovation in West Africa.

President Akufo-Addo highlighted the various forms of support provided by NEIP, including funding, training, and mentorship.

The programme's emphasis on equipping young entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and resources has been instrumental in reducing unemployment and fostering a culture of self-reliance and creativity.

The President noted that NEIP's success is evident in the numerous innovative businesses that have emerged from the programme.

These businesses, he said, are driving sustainable economic development and improving the livelihoods of citizens. NEIP has also played a crucial role in positioning Ghana as a hub for innovation in West Africa.

In addition to NEIP, President Akufo-Addo emphasized the importance of creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurship.

He noted that the government's efforts to promote entrepreneurship and innovation extend beyond NEIP, with substantial investments in education and research.

The government has disbursed over GHe700 million in research and book allowances since 2020, underscoring its commitment to advancing education and research in Ghana.

President Akufo-Addo also

highlighted the government's focus on STEM education, which is essential for fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.

He detailed the various initiatives aimed at developing high-quality STEM institutions and programmes, including the construction of the Accra STEM Academy and several STEM centres and model STEM Senior High schools.

The President concluded by urging all stakeholders to continue supporting initiatives like NEIP and to work collaboratively to advance Ghana's development through innovation and entrepreneurship.

"Together, we can build a brighter future for our nation, characterised by innovation, inclusivity, and prosperity," he said.

The Pro Vice Chancellor of Sunyani Technical University, Prof. Kwadwo Adinkra-Appiah on his part said the conference would help the 10 technological universities promote and accelerate innovation and entrepreneurship for national development.

He urged researchers, from all the 10 technical universities and those from industry to present their papers whilst government uptakes the outcome for implementation to fast track innovation and entrepreneurship development for accelerated national economic growth.

The Bono Regional Minister, Justina Owusu, said government through its several initiatives such as Planting for Food and Jobs, Nation Builders Corps among others have reduced unemployment situation in the country



• President Akufo-Addo (third from right) with other dignitaries at the programme