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# Let's focus on TVET to address unemployment — Executive Chairman, McDan Group

By Juliet Akyaa Safo

THE country needs to take practical steps to resolve the paradox of low skills gap in the face of rising unemployment, an entrepreneur has entreated.

The Executive Chairman of McDan Group of Companies, Daniel McKorley, said the mismatch between the country's education and what the industry demanded from products of universities and institutions of higher learning must be addressed head on.

Delivering the keynote address at the 70th anniversary of the Kumasi Technical University (KSTU), he stated that closing the skills gap required more focus on technical



and vocational education and training (TVET).

He was speaking on the theme, "Bridging the Skills Gap: Investing in Technical Education for Employment and Growth".

## Skills gap

Mr McKorley said the country must ensure that academic curricula aligned with industry needs to equip students and graduates with skills that made them employable and entrepreneurial.

He said thousands of young graduates stepped into the job market every year, yet industries struggled with finding the right talent.

"The skills gap is not merely an academic concern; it is an economic challenge. It affects productivity, innovation, and ultimately our national development.

Without the right skills, industries cannot expand, businesses cannot thrive, and our youth cannot fully realise their potential," he said.

**"If we truly want to prepare our youth for the workforce, we must give them real work experience, not just a lunch delivery schedule."**

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## Technical education

The serial entrepreneur emphasised that TVET was about empowering individuals with practical, hands-on skills that met the needs of industries and drove economic transformation.

"I have always believed that Africa's future will be shaped by its artisans, engineers and problem-solvers.

"If we want to compete in the global market, we must shift our focus from theoretical learning to practical, industry-driven training," Mr McKorley said.

He, therefore, commended the Kumasi Technical University for its role in the transformation, but added that there was

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still more work to be done.

## Private sector collaboration

Mr McKorley also urged the private sector to collaborate with technical universities to provide real-world exposure, internships and apprenticeships to young people.

He said companies must also ensure that interns were given opportunities to develop their skills and not just send them on errands.

“Instead of gaining hands-on industry knowledge, many interns become experts at locating the best food joints in

town — not by choice, but because they are often sent to buy food for staff instead of being trained for the work they came to learn.

“If we truly want to prepare our youth for the workforce, we must give them real work experience, not just a lunch delivery schedule,” he said.

## Invest in Technical education

The McDan Group Executive Chairman indicated that at the group, they had taken deliberate steps to invest in skills training through our McDan Entrepreneurship Challenge, scholarships and other initiatives.

He said the group was donating copies of the Compendium of Supply Chain Management Terms as well as offering its time and expertise to students studying in fields related to their businesses.

He called for more businesses, policymakers and educational institutions to join the cause to move beyond just discussing the skills gap to taking action.

Dr Mckorley also called for the prioritisation of modernising workshops, laboratories and training centres to meet global standards.

He added that students must be encouraged to create jobs through innovation and not just seek jobs.

