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VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS
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Regional Africa Creates Jobs

"Skills and Jobs for Central Africa's Economic Growth"

August – October 2021 – Online workshops

Full report

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2021

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

16-17 AUG

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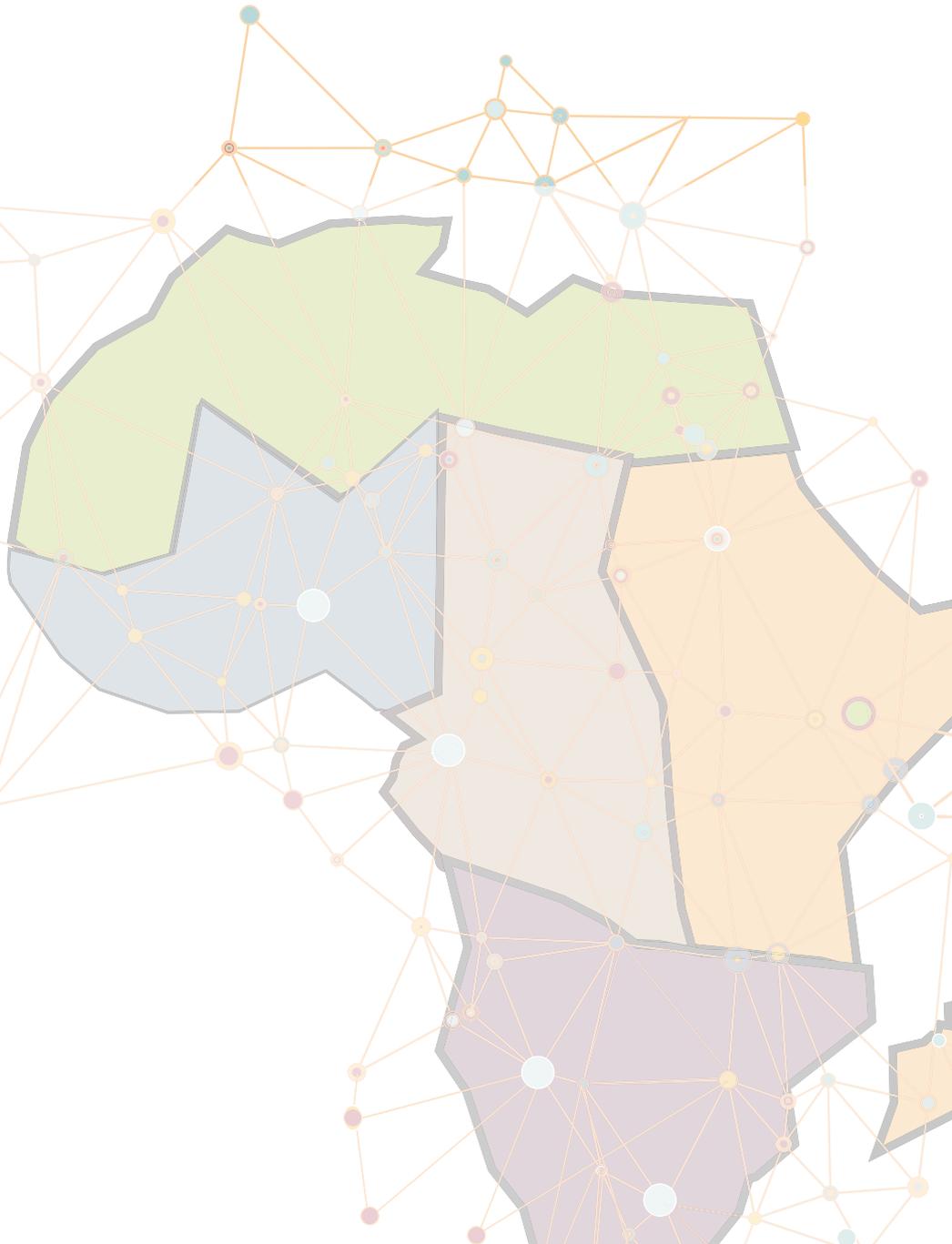
CENTRAL AFRICA

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SOUTHERN AFRICA

7-8 OCT

NORTH AFRICA



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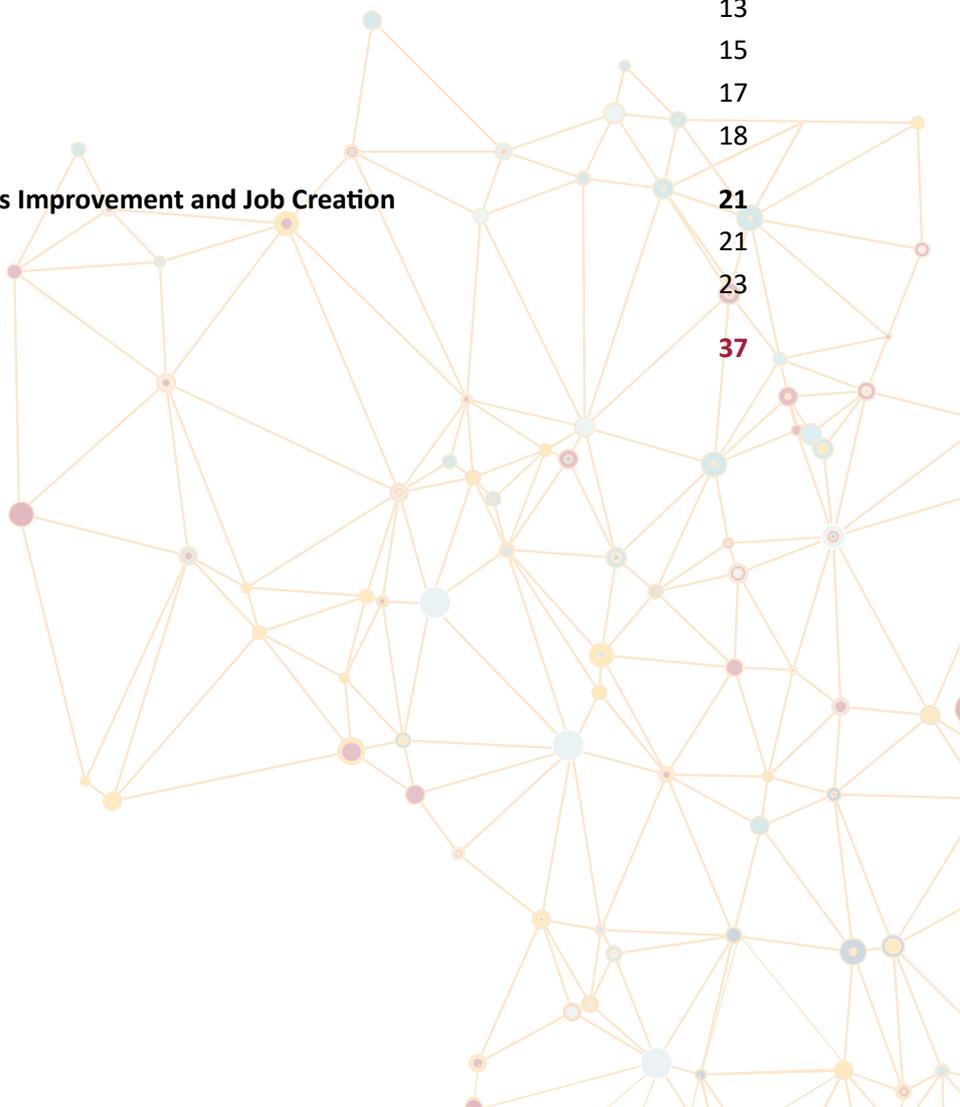
Authors

STRATEGIES! Consulting Firm
Kah Walla



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List of abbreviations

ACJ: Africa Creates Jobs

AfCFTA: African Continental Free Trade Area

APC: Assessment of Professional Competence

ASPYYE: African Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship

AU: African Union

AUDA-NEPAD: Africa Union Development Agency

AUC: African Union Commission

BA: Business Africa

BUSA: Business Unity South Africa

CTFL: Certified Tester Foundation Level

ECCAS: Economic Community of Central African States

ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

GICAM: Groupement Inter-Patronal du Cameroun

ICT: Information and Communications Technology

MSMEs: Micro- Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises

NECA: Nigerian Employers Consecutive Association

NEET: Not in Employment, Education or Training

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PPP: Public Private Partnership

RECs: Regional Economic Communities

SACU: Southern African Custom Union

SADC: Southern African Development Community

SETA: Sector Education and Training Authority

SIFA: Skills Initiative For Africa

TVET: Technical and Vocational Education and Training

UMA: Union du Maghreb Arabe

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

VAE: Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience

I. BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

1.1. Introduction and background

The African Union Commission and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) held the inaugural “Africa Talks Jobs (ATJ)” in 2017, as a dialogue platform to develop a continental response to youth employment and skills promotion. Amongst the key partners mobilized was Business Africa as the continental body representing private sector employers. To date, through this partnership, efforts are underway to continue to strengthen public and private sector partnerships to improve employment prospects for youth. In 2019, stakeholders at the Africa Talks Jobs Conference agreed to re-orientate the dialogue towards ‘Africa Creates Jobs’ in the spirit of mobilizing and further strengthening partnerships to transform and scale up skills development delivery and employment creation.

As the continent faces the challenges of adjusting to an economic recovery post the Covid-19 pandemic, policy makers are also grappling with how to spur growth through opportunities for expanded industrialization, markets and trade brought about through adoption of the new African Continental Free Trade Agreement. With these prospects in sight, this year the Africa Creates Jobs dialogue will take place in November 2021, under the theme “**Driving a responsive and agile skills and jobs agenda for economic growth for African Youth**”, to explore how the envisaged growth could meet the demand for over 20 million jobs that the continent needs per year.

As a prelude to the Continental Africa Creates Jobs conference, online workshops were organized in the five African regions to share knowledge and experience among Member States. These workshops brought together key stakeholders from government, the private and public sectors and other social partners to contemplate data and information gathered through a series of studies. These included the SIFA conducted Macro-Economic Studies carried out in five countries and the Rapid Skills Assessments in eight countries. Further research was carried out by the consulting firm **STRATEGIES!** on macro-economic studies by the African Development Bank, the World Bank Group, the OECD, etc. Elements from all the studies were compiled into a single presentation for participants that enabled them to obtain a global understanding of the skills and jobs situation on the continent and for their region specifically. The analysis and discussion on these were geared not only to determine strategies and solutions specific to each region, but also to create a dialogue platform at regional level where diverse stakeholders can continue to engage in dialogue and partnerships to develop skills and create jobs.

1.2. Workshop proceedings

The regional workshops were scheduled in two three-hour sessions over a two-day period. The first day of the workshops consisted of an opening session and an overview of the macro-economic trends.

The opening sessions were moderated by Ms. **UNAMI MPOFU**, Team Lead Skills and Employment, Human Capital and Institutional Development Division, Programme Delivery and Coordination Directorate at AUDA-NEPAD and consisted of welcome remarks provided by representatives of the private sector, the Regional Economy Communities and the African Union Commission. For each workshop, the representatives were as follows:

Regions	Private Sector	REC	AUC
East Africa		Dr. James Otieno Jowi , Principal Education Officer, East African Community	Mr. Hambani Masheleni , Head of Education Division, African Union Commission
West Africa	Ms. Celine ONI , Director Learning & Projects, Nigeria Employers Consecutive Association (NECA)		Mr. Hambani Masheleni , Head of Education Division, African Union Commission
Central Africa	Ms. Aline Valerie MBONO , Executive Director of the Employers' Association of Cameroon, GICAM	Mr. Maxime AKE , Expert in charge of Youth, Sport and Employment, ECCAS	Mr. Hambani Masheleni , Head of Education Division, African Union Commission
Southern Africa	Mr. Cas Coovadia , CEO, Business Unity South Africa (BUSA)	Ms. Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo , Head of Education Unit, UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa	Dr. Monica Idinoba , Principal Scientific Officer - Human Resources, Science and Technology, AUC
Northern Africa	Mrs. Saida Neghza , Chairperson, Business Africa (BA)		Mr. Hambani Masheleni , Head of Education Division, African Union Commission

Each regional workshop then focused on the presentation of macroeconomic trends at both the continental and regional levels. This consisted of a summary of the Macro-economic analysis and Rapid Skills Assessment Reports¹ which were undertaken by SIFA in 8 African Union Member States, with possible scenarios of job growth potential along national productive sectors on the one hand; and trends² compiled from international organizations and institutions such as the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the International Labor Organization on the other. Participants had the opportunity to analyze and discuss these trends which in every workshop were found to be accurate in their reflection of the situation in the region.

¹ The studies are accessible in the following link: <https://www.nepad.org/publications>.

² The compiled trends are from some reports accessible below:

- https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_775883.pdf
- https://www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracenorg/Content/Publications/AfCFTA-youth_FINAL_PRINT_3.pdf
- https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/SROs/North-Africa/best-practices-in-job-creation-in-africa_uneca_202105.pdf
- https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_795453.pdf
- https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms_771731.pdf
- <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/western-africa-population/>
- <https://www.oecd.org/publications/africa-s-development-dynamics-2018-9789264302501-en.htm>

The second day of each regional workshop was focused on an input on key recommendations for demand and employment-oriented skills development as well as job creation in key sectors for post-COVID-19 economic growth.

These recommendations were a compilation derived from the various studies. They focused on:

- **The current macroeconomic conditions and key growth sectors for job creation in the region.**
- **Creating better linkages between industry and skills development to ensure skills meet the market needs of the current context.**
- **Pathways for integration of skills from the informal sector for mainstream socio-economic development.**
- **Clear linkages between the National, Regional and Continental priorities in the implementation of Continental Technical Vocational Education and Training Strategy to foster youth employment; and the TVET Decade Plan of Action.**

After the input, Stakeholders dialogues in groups were held to modify, complete, and prioritize these recommendations as well as to specify the conditions for their successful implementation. The stakeholder dialogues focused on the following key questions:

- **What are the key sectors of the economy that can ensure growth and create jobs?**
- **What are the skills needed to drive growth and competitiveness in these sectors?**
- **What are the linkages, policies and practices needed to create the synergy among public and private stakeholders to seize these opportunities?**
- **What are the key lessons from the experience of the region in facilitating economic growth and job creation?**

Information from these workshops will provide opportunities for cross-regional lessons and will be aggregated to feed into the continental ACJ in November 2021.

1.3. Stakeholders involved

Over 370 stakeholders in total were involved in the 5 regional workshops. They were actors from the business community, higher education, TVET and secondary schools, civil society, youth organizations and government policy makers. They contributed significant ideas that were captured as recommendations for skills improvement and jobs creation in each of the five regions.

II. CONTENT AND RESULTS

2.1 Continental trends

The population of the African continent is 1,340,598,113³, or 17% of the world population. 60% of this population is under the age of 24⁴; making the African continent the youngest in the world. Indeed, Africa's youth is growing rapidly and will reach 850 million people by 2050. By then, 35% of the world's youth will be African. In 2019, Africa's overall labor force participation rate stood at 63.1%, higher than the global average of 60.7%. In other words, Africa has a large working-age population. However, only 3 million jobs are created each year in the formal economy for the 16 to 20 million young people who are entering the job market annually. According to the Gallup Global Survey (2019), only 20% of young people are in full-time wage employment.⁵ About 35% of young women and 20% of young men are NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training). The lack of gainful employment is pushing young people into the informal sector, onto migration routes or into armed groups. Indeed, 40% of those recruited into rebel movements are motivated by the lack of economic opportunities. In 2020 alone, more than 2,000 migrants died in the Atlantic.⁶

2.1.1 Structural challenges of the economy: Labor market characteristics

The unemployment rate is extremely high for young people. In North Africa and Southern Africa, where economies are formalized, the rate varies between 20% and 60%. In contrast, in other regions where economies are less formalized, the rates are relatively low, between 0 and 10%. These low rates are however misleading as they simply reflect an extremely informal economy where young people are active, but where the jobs provide poor remuneration, safety and growth opportunities.

Agriculture remains the sector that employs the most, nearly 60% of the active population, despite its low productivity. Its importance is especially noticeable in Central and Eastern Africa. In other regions, the service sector employs about 40% to 60% of the working age population. The industrial sector, which is the most productive, employs the least amount of people, 12% to 23%.⁷

Skills and education mismatches are widespread in Africa. Indeed, 17.5% of employed youth are overqualified, 28.9% are underqualified, 8.3% are overeducated and 56.9% are undereducated. Both overqualification and underqualification reduce job satisfaction and contribute to unemployment.⁸

³ <https://www.populationpyramid.net/fr/afrique/2020/>

⁴ <https://ideas4development.org/jeunesse-africaine-avenir-continent/>

⁵ [Report on employment in Africa \(Re-Africa\) Tackling the youth employment challenge](#) / ILO regional office for Africa, 2020

⁶ TV5 Monde Info: Migration/Afrique: 2170 morts en 2020 dans l'Atlantique, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srBkdRXZUNE>

⁷ [Report on employment in Africa \(Re-Africa\) Tackling the youth employment challenge](#) / ILO regional office for Africa, 2020 & Africa Development Dynamics 2018

⁸ Youth Jobs, Skill and Educational Mismatches in Africa African Development Bank Group Working Paper Series n°326 November 2019 <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/publications/working-paper-series/>

2.1.2 The economy is informal, so jobs are informal

Regarding the informal sector in Africa, it is important to note that it is the main source of employment in Africa, employing 85.8% of the active population. It accounts for 71.9% of non-agricultural employment and 97.9% of agricultural employment. Also, a higher proportion of women's employment, 89.7%, is informal and higher than that of men, 82.7%⁹. The young and the elderly are two groups with very high levels of informal employment, 94.9% and 96.0% respectively. Informal employment dominates the labor market in rural (88.3%) and urban (76.3%) areas. Overall, the level of education is closely related to informality in all sub-regions. In other words, informality rates fall for higher levels of education.

2.1.3 Limitations in access to the labor market for young people



Supply-side limitations

Three main factors limit supply: First, there is the poor quality of the education system, reflected in low skills in basic education, low participation and high drop-out rates in secondary education. In addition, the general characteristics of schooling include poorly trained teachers and sub-optimal working hours. Also, curricula are limited on entrepreneurial orientations and skills development. Secondly, social and family conditions negatively impact on young people's ability to maintain stable employment. Thirdly, there are low levels of bridging social capital among young people.¹⁰



Demand-side limitations

In general, it is found that employment opportunities are limited. More concretely, demand limitations can be explained through 4 factors. First, countries' economic growth levels are low, especially in labor-absorbing sectors. Second, the structure of the economy does not allow young people with low levels of education and skills and/or limited work experience to gain strong access to formal jobs. Third, the environment is not conducive to helping small businesses and the informal sector to develop. Fourthly, because of insufficient skills and financing, young people resort to survival business activities according to their needs, rather than entrepreneurial opportunities.¹¹



Limitations on alignment

Alignment is limited when people with the right skills, available for work, exist at the same time as the vacancies, but they are not matched. This can be explained through 5 factors:

- Young people do not have access to the right information.
- Job search is expensive and young people lack the resources.
- Employers sometimes have negative perceptions of young people's abilities.
- Young people have aspirations and expectations of the world of work that lead them to refuse certain types of work.
- Young people, even when they have relevant qualifications and vacancies exist, sometimes lack ability and readiness for work.¹²

⁹ [Women and men in the informal economy: a statistical picture \(third edition\) / International labor Office – Geneva: ILO, 2018](#)

¹⁰ [Putting Youth Job Creation at the centre \(African Development Bank, 2016a: 145\)](#)

¹¹ Idem

¹² Idem

2.1.4 Effects of the COVID-19 crisis on employment in Africa

The COVID-19 crisis is expected to reverse years of economic and social progress, leaving lasting scars on African economies. If the impact of the pandemic is not contained by 2021, the total number of extremely poor Africans will rise to 514 million¹³. Employment fell by about 8.5% in 2020. Between 50% and 80% of households surveyed reported a loss of income at the height of the first wave of the pandemic, when containment measures were put in place.¹⁴

The above trends show the challenges associated with the issue of employment in Africa. These have been accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic and in certain regions such as West and Central Africa, by security crises.

2.1.5 The Opportunities for Job Creation and Skills Development

While the challenge is real, it is important to emphasize that the trends also show it is possible to create the jobs that the continent needs. This requires strong leadership, policy decisions and implementation that focus on:



Key Sectors - While these vary from region to region, continent-wide there is opportunity in: Agri-business and processing, industry with specific specializations based on regional competitive advantage, services such as education, healthcare, sales, marketing, etc.



Digitalization and Technology - The information and technology sector provide a high potential for growth itself. Most importantly, digitalization and technology can spur growth across all the other economic sectors. It is key that African countries lay emphasis on the infrastructure required to develop this sector and render information technology accessible to citizens. Training to develop skills in this area is also necessary across the board.



Market-oriented Skills Development - Throughout the continent, skills development demands radical systemic change: partnering with the private sector to ensure skills development responds to its needs, changing curricula, length and type of training to meet these needs, digitalizing at all levels, and more.



Informal Sector Transition - The economy in Africa is informal. That is where the entrepreneurial energy is, that is where many skills are developed, that is where policy makers must ensure that jobs become decent, skills are recognized, standardized and developed to enhance sustainable employment.



Focus on Women - African women are active in the economy. However, every employment challenge is more drastic and more dire for them. In all of the above strategies, countries must focus on women and ensure the policies adopted and implemented address their specific needs and contribute to equity.

¹³ [COVID-19: Over 500 million Africans may fall below extreme poverty line, warns report \(downtoearth.org.in\)](https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/covid-19-over-500-million-africans-may-fall-below-extreme-poverty-line-warns-report-100000)

¹⁴ <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2021/07/27/world-economic-outlook-update-july-2021#>

2.2 Regional Trends

2.2.1 North Africa

The current population of North Africa is 201,785,919 (including Mauritania) and is equivalent to 3% of the world population. North Africa ranks 3rd in Africa in terms of population. The median age in North Africa is 25.5 years.

Regarding the impact of COVID-19 on North African economies, it is noted that about 21 million jobs were lost from Q1 to Q3 2020¹⁵. North African economies contracted by about 1.1% in 2020, led by Egypt, which accounts for 52% of the region's GDP and was able to maintain 3.6% growth despite the relatively severe health impact of the virus in the country. Other countries experienced significant contraction in 2020, including Tunisia (-8.8%), Morocco (-5.9%), Algeria (-4.7%) and Libya (-60.3%). The North African economy is expected to recover considerably in 2021 and 2022, with growth of 4% and 6%, respectively¹⁶. Countries that are not dependent on natural resources are expected to see their average per capita income increase by 21.6% by 2025. Oil exporters, which are among the most populous countries in the region, will not see their per capita income increase over this period. The region must act swiftly and decisively to redress its economy which was at a growth rate of 4.3%, was already slightly below the continental average of 4.6% for the period 2000 to 2018.

The growth drivers of this region are services (46% of GDP), industry (36%) and agriculture (17%). In what is one of the most industrialized regions of the continent, the weight of industry varies from country to country: in Tunisia it is 23.1%, in Mauritania 28.4% and in Algeria 37.4%¹⁷. In Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia, tourism is of primary importance. Jobs in high-productivity sectors such as finance, telecommunications, manufacturing or health account for a small proportion of new jobs. Sectors with high labor demand are services, mining, manufacturing and agriculture. The following table shows the skills gaps to be filled in these priority sectors:

Key Sectors	Skills gaps
Services (Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing skills in the field of communication, information technology and languages.
Extractives industries (Algeria, Libya)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrading skills in engineering and project management.
Manufacturing (Morocco, Tunisia)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing skills, as well as new management and engineering practices. Strengthening innovation capabilities through training in design, marketing, branding, etc. <p>The automotive and aerospace industries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Their strong growth potential requires new skills in marketing, technological development and communication. Improvements in productivity and competitiveness require skills training for the new technological era (artificial intelligence, digitalization, big data).

¹⁵ ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work. Seventh edition

¹⁶ <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2021/07/27/world-economic-outlook-update-july-2021#>

¹⁷ Africa's Development Dynamics 2019

Key Sectors	Skills gaps
Agriculture (Mauritania)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in technical and managerial skills can lead to quality upgrading of products and a better position in the value chain. • Adapting to digital technology will boost productivity and competitiveness. • Other skills needed for productive transformation in the sector: Seed production, irrigation and processing techniques, marketing and distribution, crop conservation techniques and food processing.

In the countries of this region, the unemployment rate varies between 20 and 60%. Persistent unemployment is exacerbated by a low activity rate of about 43.9%, characterized by a large gender gap: 66.3% for men, compared to only 17.3% for women. The situation of young people is worrying in some countries such as Libya and Tunisia where unemployment rates attain 49% and 36%¹⁸ respectively. The average for the region is 28%. On the other hand, in North Africa almost 50% of young people aged 15 to 29 have a secondary education. This is the highest rate in Africa.

Several factors play a role in the high unemployment rates of educated people: Overall there are an insufficient number of jobs in the formal economy. There are also the expectations of young people to obtain certain types of work which lead them to reject certain types of work. Finally, these young people have family and community support mechanisms that allow them to look for a job for long periods of time or to wait until they get a job that matches their expectations.¹⁹ Of the university graduates who are employed, almost 50% are in jobs for which they are "overqualified". Informal employment, while lower than the other regions on the continent, still accounts for 67.3% of total employment.

North Africa is the most connected region of the continent with a 4G coverage rate of 83% in 2020.²⁰ Entrepreneurship and innovation in the digital economy therefore represent two pillars for digital transformation and job creation in North Africa. The digital economy has strong growth potential and also influences many other sectors, where it can improve productivity and indirectly contribute to job creation.

2.2.2 Central Africa

The population of Central Africa represents about 2.3% of the world population (including Angola). The region ranks fourth in Africa in terms of demography. The median age is estimated at 17.3 years.

Between 2000 and 2018, Central Africa's economic growth rate of 4.8% was above the continental average at 4.6%. In Central Africa, real GDP is estimated to have contracted by 2.7% in 2020. The countries most affected by the crisis in the sub-region are Cameroon (-2.4%), the Republic of Congo (-7.9%), the Democratic Republic of Congo (-1.7%) and Equatorial Guinea (-6.1%). Growth is expected to recover to 3.2% in 2021 and 4% in 2022 in Central Africa.²¹

¹⁸ Africa's Development Dynamics 2021

¹⁹ [wcms_577306.pdf \(ilo.org\)](#), International Labour Organization: Youth and Employment in North Africa, September 2017

²⁰ Africa's Development Dynamics 2021

²¹ <https://www.afdb.org/en/knowledge/publications/african-economic-outlook>

In Central Africa, more than 60% of the population is between 15 and 34 years old. By 2030, about 3 million young people will reach working age each year. This potential is under-exploited because young people do not have formal jobs and do not contribute fully to wealth creation. Unemployment and informal employment are predominant with 45% of the active population being young people in this situation. In Central Africa, 22.9% of young women are NEET, compared to 14.9% of young men. Informal employment accounts for 91.0% of employment in the region and is an outlet for those with little or no education. Unemployment rates are 11.5% for those with basic education, 18.5% for those with intermediate education and 38.8% for those with higher education²², an indicator of a mismatch between their skills and the needs of the labor market. Between 2000 and 2020, the number of young people with post-secondary education doubled from 9% to 18%. Before the COVID-19 crisis in Central Africa, 65.5% of people were employed, 68.7% of men and 62.4% of women.

Agriculture is the main source of employment in Central Africa with a regional average of 70.9%. Almost all countries have much higher employment rates in the agricultural sector than in other sectors. Only Gabon (43%) and Sao Tome and Principe (26%) are exceptions to this rule.²³ Services account for 26.8% of workers and industry accounts for only 9.6% of jobs.

The table below shows the specific skills that are needed in the priority sectors in Central Africa:

Sectors	Skills
Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers, • Farming, • Production, Project managers
Wholesale and Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement, • Digital marketing, • Public relations officers and Sales agents.
Accommodation and food services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event support staff, • Managers, • Marketing,
Information and communication technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication, • ICT experts, • processing, refining and exporting
Other services: education, health, financial services etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaners, • Healthcare: Midwives, Nurses

²² Africa's Development Dynamics 2018

²³ Idem

2.2.3 West Africa

The region's population represents about 5.16% of the world's population. West Africa ranks number 2 in population among the sub-regions and will be number 1 by 2050. The median age in the region is 18.2 years.

Before COVID-19, West Africa's GDP accounted for 24% of the continent's total GDP²⁴. West Africa's economy ranks second only to North Africa. Nigeria, Ghana and Ivory Coast account for 85% of regional GDP. Over the past decade, the region's economic growth has been sustained, but remains exposed to external shocks. The economy is heavily dependent on the export of raw materials. The largest economy in the region is Nigeria - 77% of the region's total GDP and 52% of its population. It has been severely affected by the fall in oil prices and ineffective counter-cyclical policies. West Africa's GDP fell by 1.5% in 2020, which is better than the initial projection of -4.3% in June 2020, partly due to the relatively limited spread of the virus in the region. Growth in the region is expected to reach 2.8% in 2021 and 3.9% in 2022, as restrictions are eased, and commodity prices rebound²⁵.

Population growth poses an unprecedented challenge. The lack of formal jobs is becoming a major challenge, as 15–24-year-olds will represent 20% of the population in 2035 amounting to about 117 million people. Informal sector activities account for between 68% and 90% of jobs with young people and women being very present. The demographic growth of West Africa, the increase in regional demand and the emergence of a middle class are great opportunities for economic development. However, this development requires the creation of millions of jobs in the formal economy²⁶. Unemployment and job insecurity mainly affect young people. They are the most vulnerable to unemployment in West Africa, with average unemployment rates twice as high as for those over 25. The 15-25 age group is the most affected by job insecurity. Youth unemployment reached 12% in 2017 and has stagnated for 25 years. This does not take into account young people in the informal sector who are often less educated. Several structural factors explain youth unemployment: insufficient economic growth, low levels of education and training and a mismatch between skills and labor market needs.

Informal employment accounts for 92.4% of total employment. This allows a significant portion of the population to participate in economic activity and facilitates labor market flexibility. However, it also greatly increases the vulnerability of workers and diminishes their contribution to overall economic growth. The working poverty rate remains very high in most countries, especially in the most informal economies: 61.7% in Guinea-Bissau, 47.9% in Mali and 44.8% in Benin. The informal sector is a major challenge to achieving MDG2 and Goal 4 of Agenda 2063, which is to develop transformed economies capable of creating jobs.²⁷

Agriculture remains the main source of employment in ECOWAS, followed by services and industry. The share of agriculture has either stagnated or declined in all countries, but it still accounts for almost 51% of employment and is overwhelmingly informal. Employment in the service sector has increased in almost all countries, with the exception of Mali and Senegal.

²⁴ CUA/OCDE (2019), *Dynamiques de développement de l'Afrique 2019 : Réaliser une transformation productive*, Éditions OCDE, Paris/ CUA, Addis-Abeba, <https://doi.org/10.1787/c1cd7de0-en>.

²⁵ CUA/OCDE (2018), *Dynamiques de développement de l'Afrique 2018 : Croissance, emplois et inégalités*, Éditions OCDE, Paris/ CUA, Addis-Abeba, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264302501-en>.

²⁶ Idem

²⁷ [Africa Development Dynamics, 2021 CUA/OCDE](#)

There has been a boom in the industrial sector linked to the expansion of informal mining, mainly small-scale gold panning. Industry which has the highest value added per worker, contributes the least to GDP and employment. The agri-food sector has good employment prospects, accounting for more than 66% of the jobs created between 2012 and 2015 - or 82 million jobs. It is the largest sector, with production worth \$178 billion in 2010, or 36% of regional gross domestic product (GDP).

Inadequate internet infrastructure is a barrier to job creation in West Africa. The number of mobile phone subscribers is increasing, but digital connectivity remains low. Access to communication infrastructure remains uneven in the sub-region. The high cost of internet connection discourages the use of applications or technologies that require continuous connection. The low number of websites among West African businesses is linked to the low proportion of households with access to a computer, the scarcity of innovative start-ups and the limited digital skills of workers.

The agriculture and services sectors, the largest pools of employment, lack large enterprises that can raise significant financial resources and mobilize innovative technologies to achieve economies of scale and productivity gains. By facilitating the transition of enterprises to the formal sector, digital transformation could serve as a lever for stable and secure jobs. Formalization improves corporate governance and allows companies to increase their profits by an average of 20%.

The following table shows the specific skills that are needed in the priority sectors in West Africa:

Sectors	Skills
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sub-sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal sciences (veterinary nursing or veterinary technologists) • Animal production (animal husbandry and optimal animal feeding), • Aquaculture, • Agricultural management and technology, and • Crop production
Wholesale and Retail sub-sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft skills: teamwork, client interaction, etc. • E-Commerce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » E-commerce application developers or stress testers, » Marketers and market analysts, » Agri-product E-Commerce buying and selling. • Entrepreneurship, marketing and business management.
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welding, • Fabrication, • Plumbing, • Pipe-fitting, • Building finishing (flooring, tiling, and roofing) and • Masonry.
Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil and agro-processing skills • Engineering technician and technologist qualifications • processing, refining and exporting

2.2.4 East Africa

The population of East Africa is equivalent to 5.71% of the total world population. By population, East Africa ranks first on the continent. The median age in East Africa is 18.7 years. East Africa continues to be one of the fastest growing regions in Africa, despite the disruption caused by COVID-19 and the locust invasion. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic lowered East Africa's growth estimate to 0.7%, but it remains higher than most of the other African regions and East Africa's growth is expected to rebound to 3.0% in 2021²⁸.

Unemployment is high among young people. The region's formal sector does not provide enough jobs for its youth. Most young people in East Africa have low quality jobs, especially the less educated, women and those living in rural areas. About 7.2 million young people are expected to reach working age each year by 2030 in the region. Young women's participation in the labor market has increased in recent years, but they still face significant constraints. Although the gender gap (measured by the ratio of male to female labor force participation) has decreased from 1.41 in 1991 to 1.39 in 2017, it remains significant. Among 15–30-year-olds, 37% of women are outside the labor force, compared to 23% of men. Unemployment and vulnerable employment are more common among young women, who tend to be engaged in trade, domestic work and service sectors, including restaurants and hotels. Under-utilization of the young labor force is low compared to other regions²⁹, however, this is due to informal employment that accounts for 91.6% of total employment.

Most employment is in self-employment and family businesses often associated with the informal sector. Self-employed and contributing family workers currently account for 75% of full-time employment in East Africa, down from 80% in 2000. More than 50% of the young people who participated in the ILO's school-to-work survey in Madagascar, Tanzania and Uganda were in vulnerable forms of employment due to lack of paid jobs or because their families demanded it.

The labor force in East Africa seems to be slowly shifting from the agricultural sector to the service sector. Though its share has been slowly decreasing: 72.2% of employment between 2000 and 2010 and 68.6% for the period 2010-2018, the agricultural sector still employs the largest share of the workforce. The service sector absorbs most of the workers who leave agriculture. For example, in Rwanda, the share of employment in the service sector increased from 9% in the early 2000s to 28% in the 2010-2018 period. However, new jobs in the services sector tend to be in low-productivity activities such as retail and hospitality, which limits the gains from labor reallocation³⁰.

East Africa has the highest penetration rate of mobile money in the world: 1,106 registered mobile money accounts per 1,000 adults. The spread of mobile money services in Kenya has helped lift at least 194,000 households out of extreme poverty. 4G coverage reached the majority of East Africans for the first time in 2019. However, only a third (34%) of the population can afford a gigabyte of prepaid mobile data. In 2019, East African tech startups raised more than USD 729 million in investment, mostly in Kenya (USD 564 million), up from USD 367 million in 2016³¹.

The drivers of economic growth in all EAC Partner States are agriculture production and processing (crops, livestock, fisheries, other agricultural activities), manufacturing and extractive industries (mining, manufacturing, electricity, water and gas, construction, other

²⁸ BAD - *Perspectives économiques en Afrique 2021; Mars 2021*

²⁹ Africa Development Dynamics, 2021, AUC/OECD

³⁰ Idem

³¹ Idem

manufacturing activities), service sectors (trade, restaurants and tourism; credit, insurance and banking; transport and storage; utilities; other services). About 80% of workers have low to medium basic skills. Less than 20% of workers have received technical and vocational training. Less than 20% of the population is considered highly skilled. The following table shows the specific skills that are needed in the priority sectors in East Africa:

Sectors	Skills
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvest-handling techniques • Seed production • Crop production methods • Feed production studies • Animal sciences • Butchering
Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food processing science • Beverage processing sciences • CTFM machine operating skills • Construction equipment manufacturing
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering processes • Site inspection skills • Woodwork • Metalwork • Finishing (flooring, tiling, roofing and so forth)

2.2.5 Southern Africa

The population of SADC is estimated at 355,688,050 (including DRC). The population of Southern Africa is equivalent to 0.87% of the total world population. The region is the least populated in Africa and ranks 5th in this criterion. The median age in Southern Africa is 27.0 years.

Prior to COVID-19, the region's average GDP growth at 3.4%, was lower than the continental average of 4.6%. Southern Africa is the region hardest hit by the pandemic, with an economic contraction of 7.0 % in 2020. It is expected to grow by 3.2% in 2021 and by 2.4% in 2022³².

The informal sector and its components account for 40.2% of overall employment in the region. South Africa has had the highest unemployment rate over the years. Before 2020, the country with the lowest unemployment rate was Madagascar, once again due to a significant informal sector. The countries with the highest total unemployment rate are from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). South Africa and Namibia experienced an increase in their unemployment rates between 2011 and 2019 of 10.5% and 18.4% respectively. The situation in terms of total unemployment in 2019 was as follows: Botswana = 18.2%, Eswatini = 22.9%, Lesotho = 23.5%, Namibia = 23.2%, South Africa = 29.1%³³.

Although very diverse, employment structures in Southern African countries can be classified into two broad groups. In the SACU countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland), structural unemployment has persisted due to labor market distortions and skill mismatches.

³² <https://www.afdb.org/en/knowledge/publications/african-economic-outlook>

³³ *Southern Africa Economic Outlook 2020 - Coping with the COVID-19 Pandemic*

In the non-SACU countries (Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe), unemployment is lower, but informality and underemployment are serious concerns³⁴.

SACU countries are characterized by a higher level of job quality but also by higher structural unemployment. In these countries, the service sector accounts for the largest share of employment, ranging from 46% in Lesotho to 71% in South Africa. Most of those employed are formal sector employees. However, the unemployment rate has remained above 15% since the 1990s. Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Eswatini even experienced an increase in their unemployment rates between 1991 and 2016. In all periods, unemployment is higher among women. Growth has been associated with service sectors and sophisticated manufacturing that requires a highly skilled workforce. However, semi-skilled and unskilled labor is in excess³⁵. Structural unemployment in SACU countries is high due to low rates of entrepreneurship. A more dynamic business environment, with higher rates of entrepreneurship and growth among small businesses, could help create much-needed jobs. The share of the labor force working as employers or as self-employed is significantly lower in SACU countries than in the rest of the region.

In non- SACU countries, underemployment is linked to in-work poverty. Unemployment rates are lower in non- SACU countries than in SACU countries, but underemployment remains pervasive, similar to many other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The extent of unemployment is masked by underemployment, as people take on unsuitable jobs in the informal sector or work shorter hours. For example, 83.9% of those employed in Zambia in 2014 were underemployed. The working poor are therefore much more numerous in these countries³⁶.

In non-SACU countries, the informal sector absorbs workers who cannot find jobs in the formal sector. In Zambia, where unemployment fell from 18.9% in 1991 to 7.5% in 2016, the share of informal employment increased from 74% to 83.9%. The informal sector covered 95% of the labor force in Mozambique in 2014 and 94% in Zimbabwe in the same year. In Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, most of the population still works in subsistence agriculture. In resource-dependent countries such as Angola and Zambia, the mining sector has contributed most to GDP growth, but little to employment. Mining accounts for only 3.5% of employment, while contributing 14% to GDP. In Angola, resource rents have attracted agricultural labor to urban services. Structural transformation is therefore an important driver for creating more and better jobs. Supporting labor-intensive activities that require relatively low skills, such as agro-processing and light industry, can create wage employment for the local workforce³⁷.

Employment remains a major challenge in Southern Africa. Long-term unemployment rates in SACU countries are as high as 15-35% due to limited job creation, skills mismatch and barriers to entrepreneurship. Youth are particularly affected by the employment problem. Youth unemployment, especially for women, has increased over time for most countries in the region. Botswana, Namibia and Eswatini experienced the largest increases in youth unemployment, each exceeding 7%, between 1991 and 2015. Except for Zambia, which recorded a sharp decline of 17.6% over the period, the other countries recorded small reductions. In some countries, youth unemployment is extremely high and has increased over time. In South Africa and Eswatini, it was estimated that more than half of young people aged 15 to 24 were unemployed in 2016. A similar pattern exists in all other countries in the region, except for Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

³⁴ Africa's Development Dynamics 2018

³⁵ Idem

³⁶ Idem

³⁷ Idem

Urgent action is needed to address this growing problem, especially in view of the 1.1 million new entrants to the labor market per year between 2015 and 2030³⁸.

Many young people are self-employed but lack the skills to succeed. In Malawi, young rural entrepreneurs have low levels of education and 80% acquire business skills informally, either through self-study (44%) or learning from family members (36%). In South Africa, just under half of young entrepreneurs had at least a high school diploma in 2016, while a quarter had some secondary education.

More than 60% of those employed are in the agricultural sector, which accounts for only 10% of the gross domestic product (GDP) of all SADC countries. Meanwhile, industry and services, which employ 30% of the workforce, account for 90% of the SADC region's GDP. The SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap (2015-63) prioritizes three growth paths: agro-processing, natural resource industries and global value chains. The challenges and opportunities for several key clusters identified by the SADC industrial strategy are presented in the table below:

Value chains	Challenges	Opportunities
Automotive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production concentrated exclusively in South Africa • Local capacity is constrained by small market size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles tailored to African needs (durable, affordable) can jump-start production
Textiles and garments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of skills and co-ordination capabilities • Local content requirements place undue burden on manufacturers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry may shift from Asia to the African continent, as production costs rise in Asia
Medical devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of adequate regulatory and accreditation framework undermine efforts of local manufacturers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to focus on research and development, education and vocational training to capitalize on value added through human capital
Pharmaceuticals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long registration time for drug licensing • Regionally fragmented regulations • Over-reliance on foreign drugs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional initiatives to increase capacity for local generic drug development and production
Agro-processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-holder farmers impede economies of scale, mechanization and fail to meet national and international standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives to support small-holder farmer • Investment in climate smart agriculture

³⁸ Idem

2.3 Key Recommendations for Skills Improvement and Job Creation

2.3.1 Continental Level

While there is significant diversity in the economies between African regions as well as from country to country, many challenges remain the same and can be addressed with strategies that are common throughout the continent. This is true for both job creation and for skills development.



For Job Creation

While Africa has prided itself in the last decade on being one of the fastest growing regions in the world, the continent's economic growth is insufficient in response to its demographic growth. African countries must take and implement the decisions and policies that will structurally transform its economies. These include:

Ensuring Private Sector Growth and Informal Sector Transformation – In far too many countries the fundamental economic framework and business environment is lacking. Countries need to revamp infrastructure (transportation, energy, internet, etc.) so that businesses can grow. The need to create fiscal policies that foster growth, and they need to ensure the financing required for small and medium-sized businesses, especially in the informal sector, to grow and create jobs.

Realistic and mutually beneficial working partnerships must be put in place between the private sector, with special measures for the informal sector, to develop and implement strategies that catapult growth and transform skills development on scale. Developing standards for upskilling, reskilling and skills development must be a joint public-private endeavor. Governments must encourage private sector platforms and associations, including with the informal sector, that facilitate these partnerships and enable impact on the economy as a whole.

Finally, innovation including through digitalization and technology can only have impact on scale if it is developed jointly by government and the private sector, including the informal sector. Governments must put in place policies and platforms that enable dialogue, partnership and joint project implementation.



For Skills Development

From TVET, to universities through primary and secondary education, Africa's skills development system needs to be revamped. Needs identification must be based on market demand. Curricula need to shift not only to meet market demand, but to integrate digitalization, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Mindsets and culture must be shifted from a diploma-culture to a skills and aptitude-culture. Teachers and trainers have to undergo retraining and upskilling. Teachers and trainers must themselves hold decent jobs with adequate pay and stimulating working conditions. Infrastructure in training facilities needs to be rebuilt to respond to these needs.

Governments cannot do this alone. They must build the platforms at national level where private sector, informal sector, financing institutions, development partners, parents and teachers associations can come together to analyze, discuss, and take decisions that transform the skills development ecosystem as a whole.



Information is the baseline

The regional workshops demonstrated once again that data is key to taking good decisions. In far too many African countries baseline data on jobs, skills, growth and development are lacking. When they are present at the national level, they are all too often absent at the subnational level where implementation for job creation and skills development actually takes place.

Governments must put in place mechanisms and systems to gather the macro-economic data that will enable them to make informed strategic decisions, monitor the effectiveness of their implementation and redirect for continuous growth.



Innovative Economic Sectors

As governments develop overall economic strategies, it is important that they consider innovative and unexplored economic sectors such as the blue economy, sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth; the green economy, sustainable use of the earth's resources for economic growth; and the culture economy, music, dance, art, film, books, etc.

These sectors were raised in the regional workshops as areas that hold great potential for Africa.



African Women are Key

With the highest economic activity rate in the world, African women are already busy in its economies. However, they are plagued by high representation in vulnerable employment, insufficient access to upskilling and retraining, insufficient access to digital technology, an overburden of social and community responsibilities and very high working poverty rates.

Developing specific strategies for women in the economy is key to enabling Africa to unlock its economic potential. Gender-specific strategies need to be developed at all levels of skills development, in terms of access to entrepreneurship, in informal sector transition and more. Giving women the possibility to contribute to African economies at their highest potential will mean growth for countries on multiple fronts.

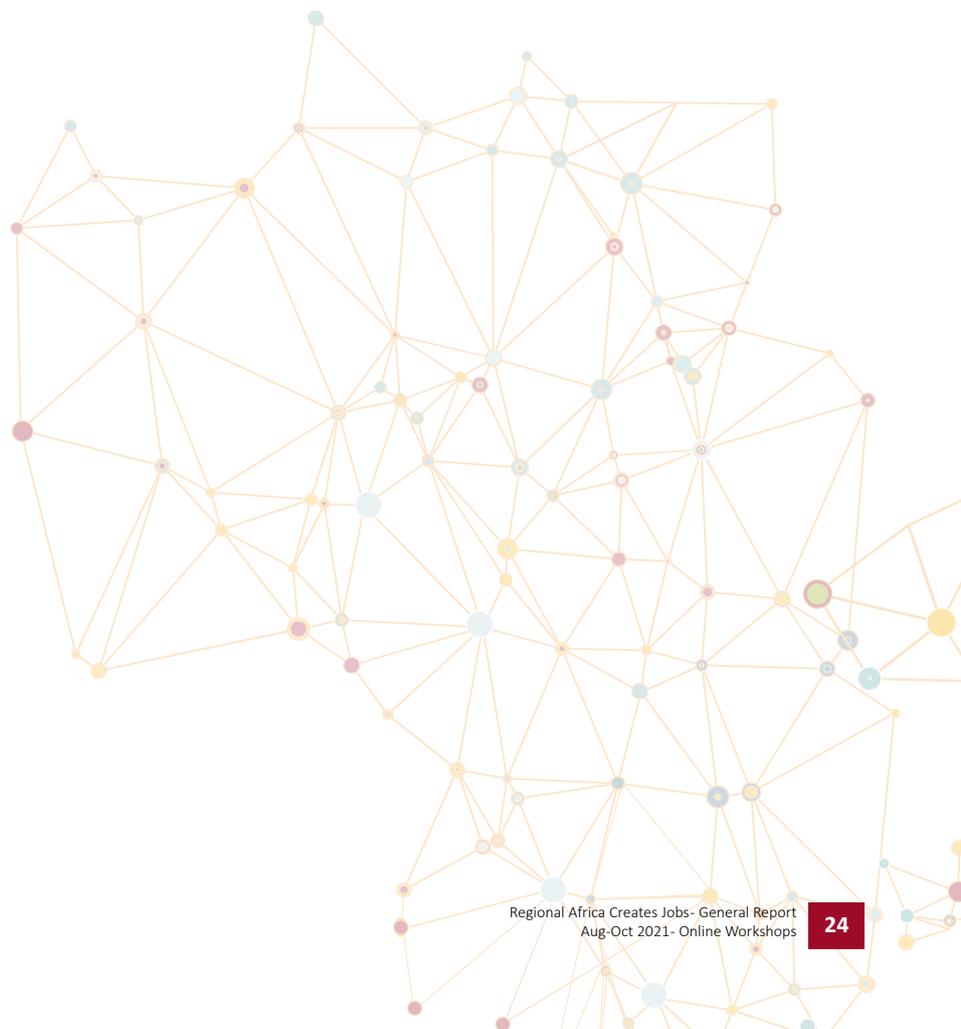
2.3.2 Regional Level

These overall recommendations are drawn from the detailed discussions that took place in each region. The recommendations were made taking into account regional specificities.

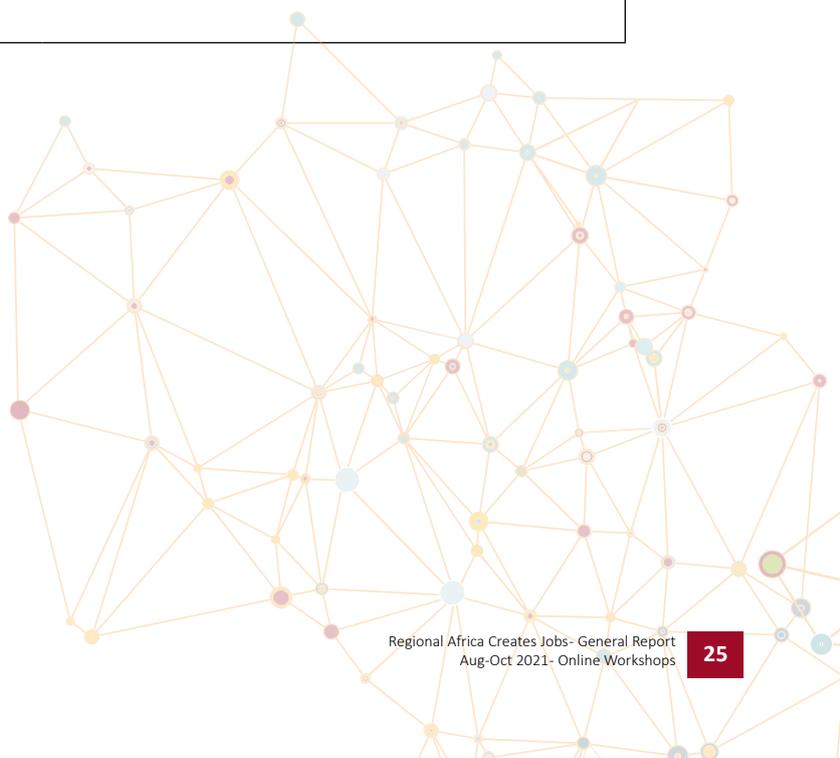
2.3.2.1 To the Governments

East Africa
Enhance skills development
National level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance the right to adequate food and nutrition which is a prerequisite for learning. • Promote the active agency of youth, women and small-scale food producers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Focus on Agro-ecology » Tackle the climate crisis • Allocate more resources to TVET. • Develop a system of homologation to recognize the skills of workers. • Ensure the transformation of the curricula - Upgrade skills with courses that address specific demands of the industries. • Initiate and promote Public-Private Partnerships and linkages to improve the skills of young graduates. • Develop youth entrepreneurship skills.
Create jobs
National level:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in place fiscal incentives to support the private sector. • Provide an enabling environment for TVET institutions and private sector. • Enhance synergy between institutions by creating or supporting platforms at different levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Social dialogue with industries » Trade unions and worker associations » Private sector groupings and associations • Develop a mechanism for very strong apprenticeship and training internship. • Improve national mechanisms to identify and develop talent
What the government could do regarding the informal sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the informal sector and its contribution to the economy and to job creation. • Recognize the skills and competencies acquired in the informal sector. • Develop processes to certify, upskill and integrate competencies from the informal sector. • Build capacity of the informal sector with regard to compliance, notably occupational health standards. • Enhance entrepreneurial skills and operational management of informal sector entrepreneurs. • Reduce the cost of compliance.

West Africa
Create jobs
National level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate significant budget to youth education/training / Put in place a lever where the private sector and governments could financially contribute to finance the youth education/training. • Implement effectively and efficiently decisions and recommendations taken at regional/continental level (domestication & implementation). • Involve Civil Society in the process to be watchdog of the implementation of recommendations. • Establish PPP that speaks to skills, employability and entrepreneurship. • Engage with all key stakeholders to make sure they all contribute to the policy making. • Ensure coherence between these policies and other policies. • Have policies to incentive the employers
What the government could do regarding the informal sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impulse a mindset shift in order to consider the informal economy at its real value. • Capture the data on the informal sector to understand it and be able to deliver services to the informal sector. • Gradually formalize the informal sector taking into consideration issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fiscal system – in many cases the system hinders formalization » Capacity building » Support to businesses to grow. Growth goes with formalization » Standardization and Certification » Ensure citizen participation in decision-making and the presence of young people in decision-making circles.



Central Africa	
Enhance skills development	
National level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise the awareness of the youth on their role in the development of their country. • Focus on soft skills and integrate: Moral, civic and entrepreneurial rearmament. • Focus on infrastructure development through the provision of modern technical facilities to vocational and technical training institutions. 	
Create jobs	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support youth initiatives through various government and partner programs. • Improve the professionalization system by encouraging the placement of students in companies to alternate theoretical/practical training. • Accelerate the Decentralization Process: will capture job creation opportunities at the local level based on the comparative advantages of localities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage states to accelerate the decentralization process. • Facilitating skills mobility.
What the government could do regarding the informal sector	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize training for certification, qualification to enable informal sector actors to meet standards and make the transition to the formal sector. • Create an ecosystem (legal framework, policies) where informal sector businesses can feel safe to expand and transition to the formal sector - remove bottlenecks and corruption. • Mobilize finance to enable informal sector enterprises to grow and have financial stability. • Improve the Business environment so that administrations are truly at the service of entrepreneurs. • Create digital platforms to promote transparency and limit corruption. • Put in place fiscal incentives that encourage migration to the formal sector. • Set up a pilot project for the transition to the formal sector that considers the different aspects: training, policies, financing, etc. The project should bring together key stakeholders, test ideas and draw lessons for replication and expansion. 	



Southern Africa	
Enhance skills development	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to private sector – platform of discussion. • Be more strategic in getting funding from International Organizations (for TVET upskilling). • Develop good and strong TVET strategies (considering Gender, Sustainability, ICTs, etc.) in order to negotiate with funders. • Ensure they have skilled people working on TVET (TVET is poorly managed by the government). • Consider TVET as a strategic lever. • Expand research funding to be inclusive for formal sector and informal businesses. • Develop an agile curriculum framework – one that can change and adapt to demand-led skills. • Upskill and reskill teaching personal at all levels. • Strongly advocate for TVET and apply innovative funding models. • Bring back apprenticeship programs in partnership with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Private sector – facilitate apprenticeships and transition to jobs. » Informal sector – structure and formalize apprenticeships. Certify skills and gradually transition to formality. 	<p><u>Actions to be taken by SADC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a standard, so that all person going through TVET in southern Africa will be able to be trained, certified and work even outside their countries – This could facilitate workers mobility. • Put in a platform for experience sharing between experts in TVETs- local to global perspectives. • Put in place a platform to promote best practices from countries. • Monitor and review the strategic framework for the development of TVET (2018 – 2027) and adapt regularly. <p><u>Actions to be taken by AU</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the work done by RECs on TVETs to adjust the continental strategy.
What the government could do regarding the informal sector	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote digitization: e.g., Enhance the visibility of social events for networking – to share best practices how to move informal to formal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Support the informal sector in tracking their productivity. » Create incentives to help informal sector provide social security protection for their employees. » Ensure that the informal sector is included / informed on programs and that the information channels to them are clear: this could be supported by grassroots campaign. » Invest in capacity building to MSMEs to help them grow and move from informal to formal economy - <i>Evidence shows that capacity building to MSMEs is more important than access to finance.</i> <p><u>Actions to be taken by AU and SADC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize online networking activities. • Create platforms where people can share on what they do and best practices. 	

Northern Africa	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a PPP platform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Awareness-raising program to increase young people's interest in TVET and not in continuing education. • Encourage the private sector to welcome future learners. • Improve TVET regulatory frameworks in countries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Quality of training » Adequacy with the needs of the employment sector (Synergy between TVET, Higher Education & Labor Market). • Create mechanisms to support access to employment / a qualification framework respecting the needs of the labor market. • Create consensus with social partners on the conditions for decent work. • Develop short complementary training courses for higher education graduates to access jobs requiring moderate qualifications. • Communicate and raise awareness on the importance of vocational skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Differentiating between a university/school diploma (diploma cult) and a ready-to-use professional qualification. • Develop a partnership between the public sector and private TVET operators to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Improving the regulatory framework » Improving the infrastructure » Improving training curricula in line with labor market needs • Define incentives to encourage companies to host students for study or academic placements. <p><u>Paradigm to review!?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the specificities of technical education and vocational training (in-company training/ VAE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develop the skills of each system to produce results that benefit the employment sector » Strengthen the complementarity between the two systems 	
What the government could do regarding the informal sector	
<p><u>Informal Sector:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the competence acquired (in the informal sector) for a job (in the formal sector) • Find a link between the educational level and the qualification level for a job • Ease administrative, fiscal, and banking procedures to facilitate the transition to the formal sector • Develop procedures adapted to each sector!!! <p><u>To UMA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as a facilitator and coordinator of dialogue between different ministries and even between employer organizations <p><u>To the AU:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an African Qualifications Framework (AQF) to facilitate mobility within the AfCFTA • Promote a framework for technical exchange between TVETs in different countries and the employment planning and policy frameworks of regional and continental organizations • Set up a continental exchange platform for Awareness raising and sharing of good practices <p><u>To SIFA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical support to enable countries to develop a roadmap for the implementation of the recommendations on skills development and job creation on the continent. 	

2.3.2.2 To the Private Sector:

Several common points emerged from the discussions during the five ACJ Regional Workshops. These include the following:

At national level

- a. Partnership between Governments and their private sector to better address job creation and skills challenges.
- b. Collaboration between TVET and private sector companies to adjust the training program, adapt programs to market demands and establish academic internship programs for learners.
- c. Leverage technology as a tool for upskilling and for creating new jobs.

At regional level

- d. RECs to act as a facilitator and coordinator of dialogue between different ministries and even between employer organizations.
- e. Involvement of RECs in coordinating the activities of employers' organizations for better advocacy.
- f. RECs to define with other actors the real needs of the economy both at national and regional level in terms of skills and facilitate.
- g. RECs to establish a platform for dialogue between the countries' employers on the issue of TVET.

East Africa	
Enhance skills development	
National Level	Regional Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private-public partnerships - Connect private sector to institutes of higher learning and those providing training for curriculum design, partnership during training, internships, and more. • Leverage technology as a tool for upskilling and for creating new jobs. • Youth partnerships with training institutions. • Involve HR consultants in the process of making jobs available to youth. • Engage policy makers to promote prioritization of skills building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a synergy at the level of identifying the gaps in skills needed. • More private sector engagement and sharing of good practices in specific sectors, manufacturing for example.

West Africa	
Enhance skills development	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage local TVET institutes to forecast skills needs (current & future). Define with other actors the real economic needs both at national and regional level in terms of skills. Support TVET trainer development, through exposure to current industry trends. Promotion of dual training (more practice than theory). Investment by the private sector and government in the development of training curricula according to APC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The private sector should work with ECOWAS to have a standard framework to improve skills transfer. Seek input from some professional bodies on training curricula. Effective implementation of job and training observatories. Adopt the competency-based training approach. Define with other actors the real needs of the economy both at national and regional level in terms of skills.
Create jobs	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicate priority investment sectors and proposals for job creation. Develop appropriate information systems for the labor market. Improving the HR planning system. Strengthen educational and vocational information and guidance services. Create consultation frameworks to solve land problems and develop training programs in rural areas, mobilize investment funds instead of giving cultivable land to multinationals that come to the country. Create a reference framework for professions to better master activities. Each country must have a national employment map. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate private sector-led business incubators at regional and continental levels. The private sector must be better involved at the regional level to get engaged in the AU and ECOWAS projects. The regional private sector should again work with ECOWAS and the creative economy to see how they can have a market to sell these goods and services.

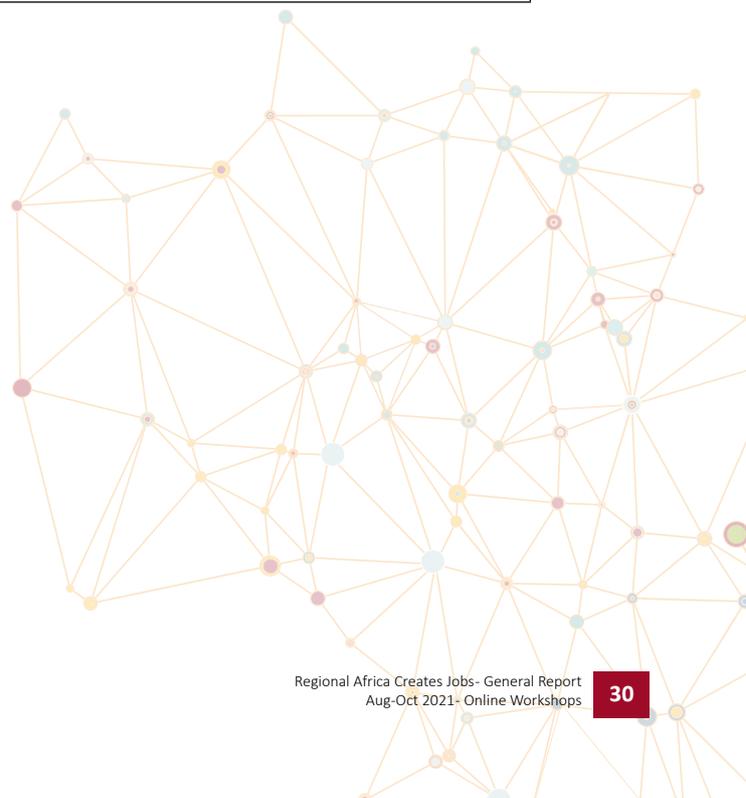
Central Africa
National Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linking TVET and private sector companies to adjust the training curriculum. Recruiting TVET trainees into courses. Governments must recognize work-linked programs and TVET qualifications. Major companies must create vocational training centers that are supported and recognized by governments. Set up working groups bringing together the public, private and informal sectors.

Southern Africa

Enhance skills development

National Level

- Use existing funding (taxes & levies for skills) to foster reskilling or upskilling, with government support.
 - ✓ **Best Practice:** Existing model in South Africa: Companies use Tax breaks for virtual training systems, they provide stipends to trainees and have a sales training program for specific products which the trainees can choose to learn to sell.
- CISCO will be able to cover virtual training programs for digital skills (entire SADC) – With recognized certification globally (necessity to have a secure platform) - Possibility to work with BUSA & Government
 - ✓ SIFA (Cheryl James) will follow up to see how this roll out can be coordinated.
- Use the downtime of companies to facilitate the access to online training facilities (both devices and data) for employees and other trainees.
- Use existing funding (Ex: SETA in South Africa) to restructure skills learning and orientation for enterprise development, for career, for vocational training. Do this in partnership with universities, TVET, youth associations.
- **Existing Model:** South Africa has sustainable funding for the TVET – There is a challenge with the cost of data bundles, connectivity in the region. How can we make sure that the TVET is funded in a sustainable way?
 - ✓ Government: Develop policies to give incentives to private companies which furnish these bundles (e.g.: Tax breaks).
 - ✓ Internet Providers: An opportunity to develop their market by supplying the data at a lower rate.
 - ✓ Private sector: Invest sustainably in training the future workforce (funds for training).
 - ✓ Partnership between Government and Private companies (PPPs).
 - ✓ Creation of training programs by companies' associations (sector or general associations).
 - ✓ TVET must update their curricula in order to adapt their programs to the market demands.
 - ✓ TVET must indicate what is important (e.g.: need for data bundles, internet) when drafting their budget (addressed to the government).
 - ✓ **Existing model:** Licensing obligations – Ensuring free connectivity to schools. Possibility to replicate the model in the SA Region.



Northern Africa	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop agreements between centers and companies. • Be actively involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The development of profiles according to needs, which will facilitate their integration. » Design of training centers, programs. » Implementation of programs - involving professionals. » Funding TVET which will also lead to more involvement. • Establish academic internship programs for learners. • Improve continuous training for the preservation of workers' jobs. • Harmonize/coordinate the activities of employers' organizations for better advocacy in collaboration with workers' unions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a platform for dialogue between the countries' employers on the issue of TVET. • Establish a framework to promote work-linked training between countries. • Harmonize/ coordinate the activities of employers' organizations for better advocacy - with the lead of Business Africa.

2.3.2.3 To TVET Practitioners:

Several common points emerged from the discussions during the five ACJ Regional Workshops. These include the following:

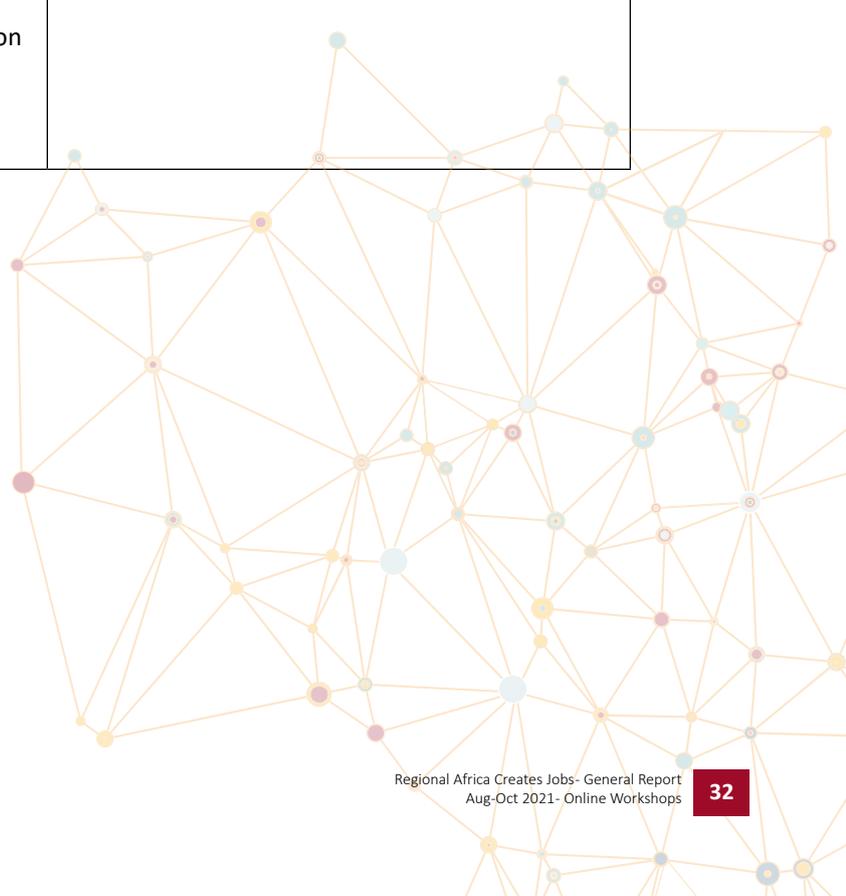
At national level

- Raising awareness of the value of TVET in terms of job creation opportunities
- Assessing the skills required in specific areas
- Establishing partnerships with the public and private sectors to improve access to learning opportunities, create a knowledge base, adapt curricula to market needs
- Designing programs that provide both theoretical and practical training
- Reviewing and standardizing TVET curricula and certification of institutions to improve the quality of training
- Promoting entrepreneurial culture

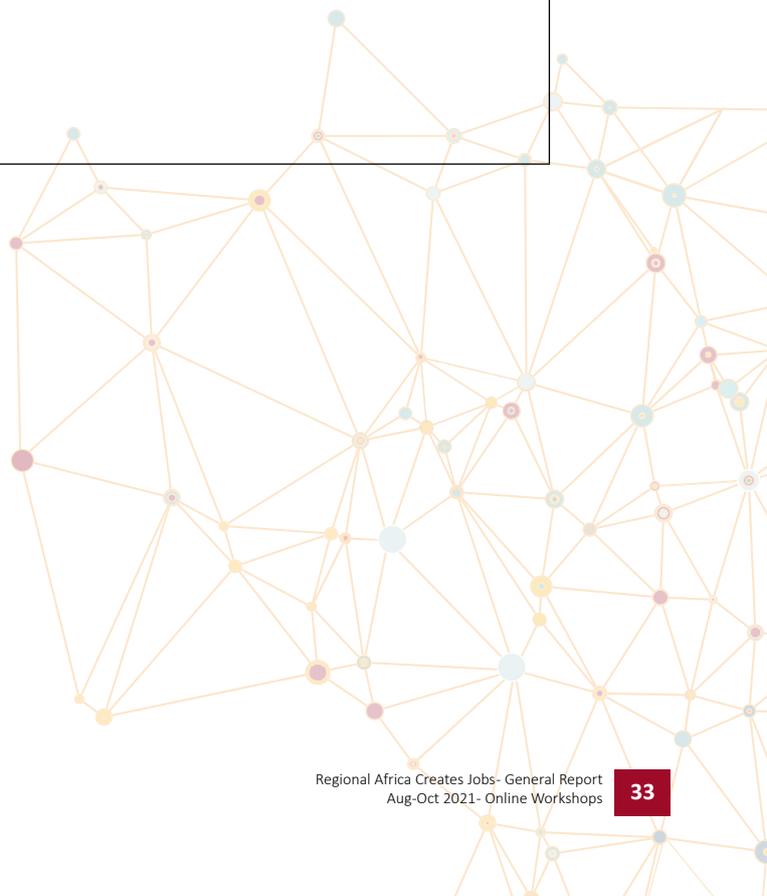
At regional level

- Harmonize the qualification system, programs and certifications
- Have a common standard for assessment and training
- Recognizing prior learning in the TVET/certification sector to encourage youth and skills mobility
- Identifying and investing in the skills of the future
- Ensuring that qualifications issued are in line with international standards

East Africa	
Enhance skills development	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement between TVET centers and employers to adapt curriculum to market needs. • Break the stigma of just going to university to succeed and create a culture where it is also possible through developing technical skills. • Training of TVET trainers and administrators on digitizing TVET (curricula and content). • Holding providers accountable for the curriculum they deliver. • Ensure there is a practical phase in all training programs. • Integrate entrepreneurship and soft skills (leadership, marketing, project management, etc.) in TVET institutions. • Develop Youth Trainers of Trainers as key stakeholders in the provision of training and making TVET attractive e.g. in Tech, young people are tech savvy and can be supported to assist in pairing up or reverse mentoring. • Integrate e-commerce and digital and business skills in curricula. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardize curriculum, qualification and certification. • Identify and invest in skills for the future such as skills for green jobs. • AfCFTA should be a benchmark for skills and services that need to be exchanged regionally.
Create jobs	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership between TVET centers and private companies for training in specific skills. • Strengthen private TVET centers for the creation of centers of excellence and innovation. • Empower existing TVETs to recognize prior learning of artisans acquired informally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure qualifications delivered are aligned to international standards

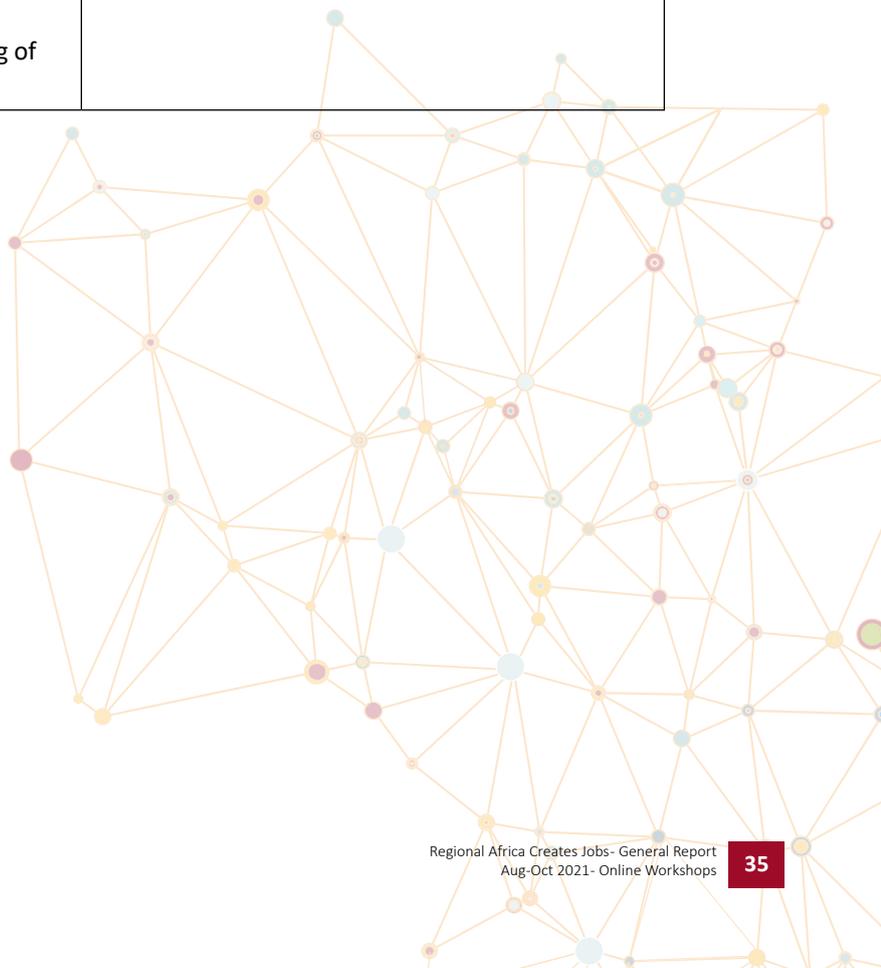


West Africa	
Enhance skills development	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the level of awareness for TVET generally (schools, community, etc.), and its value in job creation opportunities, and access to skills development pathways. • Assess skills required in specific areas – for countries where this has not yet been done. • Improve access to apprenticeship opportunities through partnerships with private and public sector. • Design courses that provide for practical and theoretical training. Recommended to have at least 60% of class in industry, focused on practical, on-the-job exposure and 40% theory in class training. • Review and standardize TVET curriculum and certification for institutions. • Provide specialized facilities and structures in TVET institutions that meet the needs of vulnerable, especially girls and students with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonize the qualification system. • Have a common standard for assessment and training required for future sectors in the regions to harmonize the curriculum.
Create jobs	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More collaboration between industry & TVET – Public Private Partnership with clear roles and responsibilities, including agreements for on-the-job training. • Recognize prior learning to the TVET sector – Certification. • TVET to operate some employment service centers both in urban and rural areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize prior learning to the TVET sector – Certification- This will facilitate job mobility for youth.

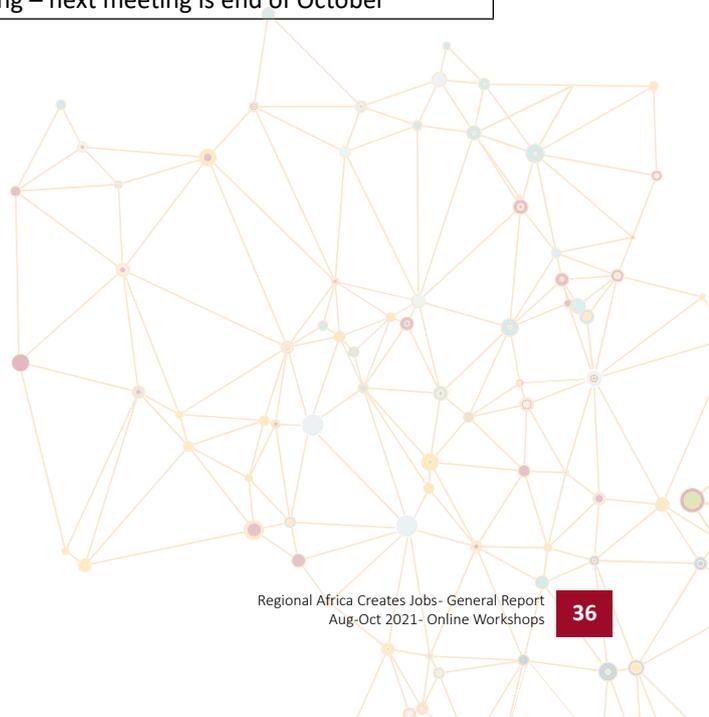


Central Africa	
Enhance skills development	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a knowledge base in collaboration with the private sector. • Have open space to practice skills learned – Government to support. • Improve quality of training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Integrate soft skills in curricula – planning, entrepreneurship. » Update and harmonize curricula while integrating the practical aspect. • Have a paradigm shift. • Sensitization towards parents and other stakeholders on TVETs- change of mindset from diploma to building specific skills. • Promote entrepreneurial culture. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Encourage students to form teams to create their own companies. » Get their students to engage and participate in national/international innovation & entrepreneurship competitions. » Creation of incubators to support those who want to start their business. • Strengthen orientation and build partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Create departments focused on career development and counselling. » Match students and professionals for experience sharing and orientation on selected sectors. » Partnership with companies for internships and with start-ups in selected sectors. • Develop community-oriented solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Identify skills / competences to develop in priority sector in communities. » Develop/ adapt curricula based on needs from the community where TVET institutions are located. • Strengthen skills of trainers. • Build a culture of apprenticeship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major companies must create vocational training centres that are supported and recognized by governments. • Set up working groups bringing together the public, private and informal sectors
Create jobs	
National level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More entrepreneurial skills, incubators and accelerators • Senior people with experience • People with professional experience • Students from TVET or universities who can enter incubators • TVET institutions should leverage on their Alumni-communities by creating a database where could share opportunities • Partnership with companies for internships and with start-ups in selected sectors 	

Northern Africa	
Enhance skills development	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise the branches of orientation from secondary school to university. • Make a diagnosis of the needs of the different regions of the country to harmonize with the growth sectors of the regions - Encourage young people to train and do internships in their region. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To set up conventions between the centers and the companies (case of Tunisia). ✓ Evaluate current and future needs in manpower. ✓ Designing and developing programs and contents adapted to the needs of companies. • Develop short-term training courses • Improve orientation and training for future occupations. • Integrate entrepreneurship from primary school. • Develop a communication strategy on available training opportunities. • Encourage work-linked training • ICT / Digital: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Promote digital skills in the blue and green economy in TVET systems ✓ Generalizing distance/digital training • Ensure pedagogical and technical upgrading of teachers and trainers of trainers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop training specialties adapted to the needs of the region - which would promote the mobility of skills. • Establish framework agreements governing the professional integration of young people - mutual recognition of skills. • Harmonize the recognition of diplomas - Encourage co-certification • Standardize the nomenclature of qualifications



Southern Africa	
Enhance skills development	
National level	Regional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments to reach out to private sector – platform of discussion. • TVETs to create strong partnerships with private sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Internships ✓ "improved" quality of training being provided by the TVET sector • Put in place an advisory board meeting quarterly to looking at the alignment with what private sector needs. • Integrate ICT in TVET <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Data collection (monitoring of type of equipment available/ needed) ✓ Tracking of content • Update and align curricula to the needs of the private sector – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Focus on competency-based curriculum ✓ Making use of pictures • For teachers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continued training of teachers ✓ Provide teachers with industry experience • Involve professionals in the training process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a gender sensitive TVET framework • Harmonize training to the growing sectors of various countries to facilitate workers' mobility in the region <p><u>Actions to be taken by SADC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a standard, so that all person going through TVET in southern Africa will be able to be trained, certified and work even outside their countries – This could facilitate workers mobility. • Put in a platform for experience sharing between experts in TVETs- local to global perspectives. • Put in place a platform to promote best practices from countries. • Monitor and review the strategic framework for the development of TVET (2018 – 2027) and adapt regularly <p><u>Actions to be taken by AU</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the work done by RECs on TVETs to adjust the continental strategy <p><u>Examples of Good Practice from the Southern Africa Region</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CISCO offers platform for experience sharing on TVET <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Learning and knowledge management » Power point presentation » Training of lecturer • ASPYEE portal • SADC having regular meetings on best practices sharing – next meeting is end of October



III. CONCLUSION

Five regional workshops were held online between August and October 2021 to prepare the Continental Africa Creates Jobs to be held in November 2021. The regional ACJ workshops were effective in bringing together the essential stakeholders for job creation and skills development and in stimulating an evidence-based discussion that deepened the situation analysis and developed specific recommendations adapted to the needs of the region.

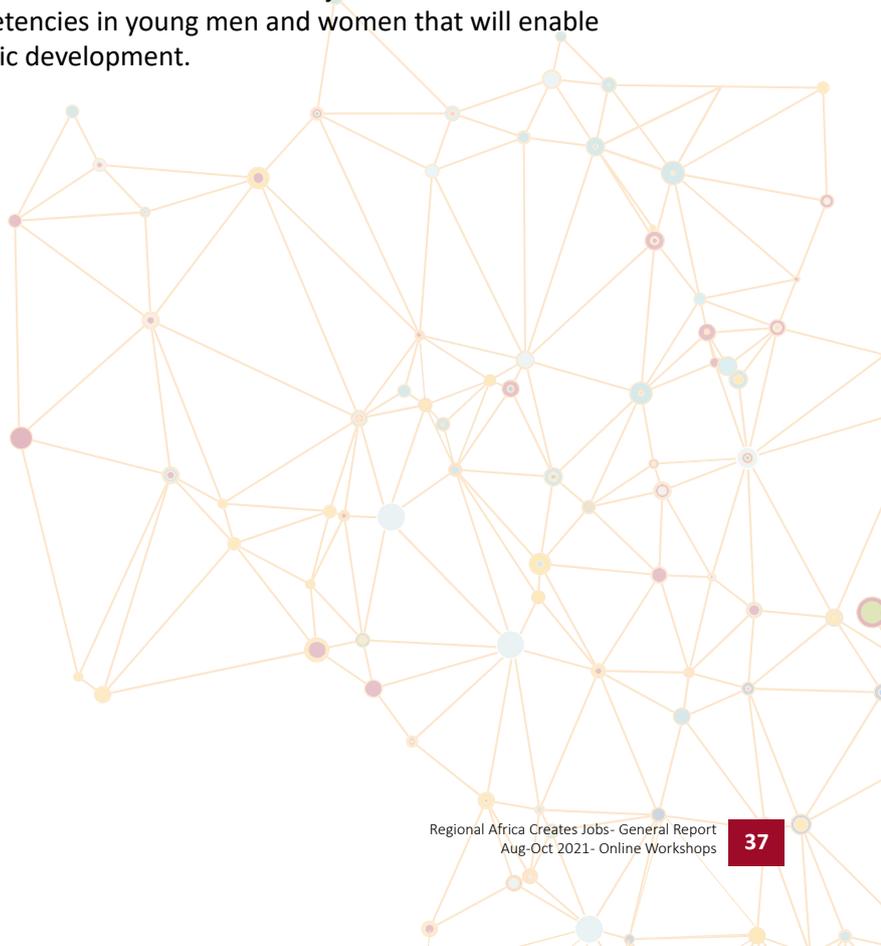
The results presented in this report will serve as a basis for discussion at the Continental Africa Creates jobs event as it engages decision-makers from the national, regional, and continental levels. At both the regional levels and the continental level the African Union Commission and the AUDA-NEPAD have partnered with Business Africa, Regional Economic Communities, TVET practitioners and civil society actors to ensure an inclusive and comprehensive conversation.

In a context where the Continent is:

- ✓ **implementing the Plan of Action for the African Decade for Technical, Professional, Entrepreneurial Training and Youth Employment**
- ✓ **putting into the place the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA)**
- ✓ **stimulating economies following the COVID-19 crises**
- ✓ **seeking economic growth to mitigate the impacts of other crises including security, climate change and natural disasters**

the Africa Creates Jobs events at regional and continental levels are timely and pertinent.

The concrete proposals made during the regional ACJ events should inspire bold discussion, decisions and actions at the continental level to create the 20 million jobs the continent needs annually and develop the skills and competencies in young men and women that will enable Africa to make a quantum leap in economic development.



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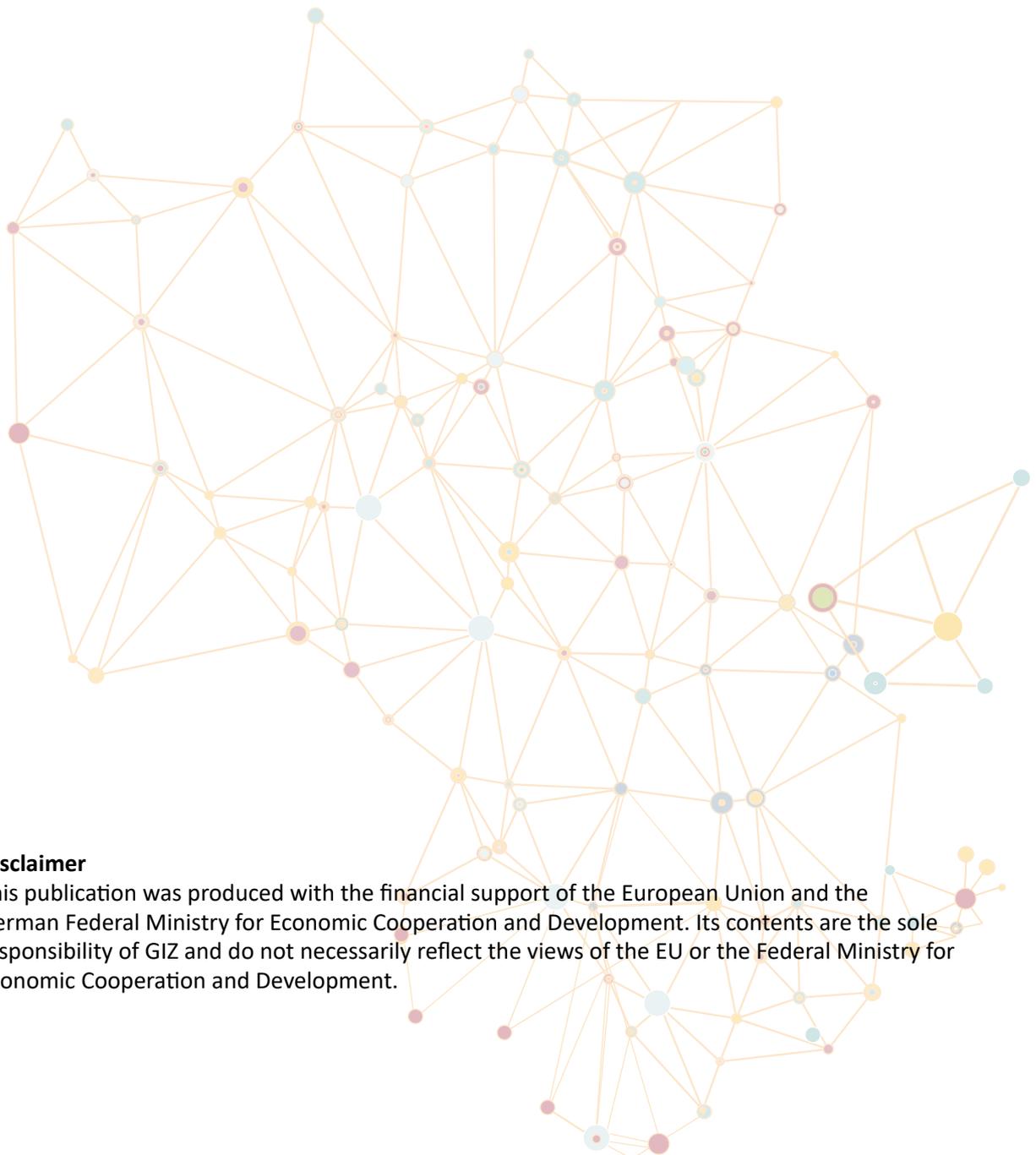
Contact: Unami Mpofu, Email: UnamiM@nepad.org
<https://www.nepad.org/skillsportalfor youth>

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