

« Harnessing Demographic Dividend through Investments in the Youth »

African Forum on Youth Skills & Enterprise in the Digital Age

Tunis 18 – 19 April 2018

www.digitalskills4Africanyouth.org

Activity of the CESA-ICT in Education Cluster

Co-organized by:

**Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment of Tunisia/African Union Commission
(HRST)/GESCI/ADEA/UNICEF**

Partners: JP-IK, ISESCO, ITWORX, ACT

Concept Note

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1. Context and challenge

In its 2063 Agenda, the African Union states that one of its main aspirations is “an Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth.” Over the next few decades, Young Africans will play a critical and detrimental role in the social and economic development of the continent.

According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) Population Division’s report “*Youth population trends and sustainable development*”, in 2015, Africa was home to 226 million young women and men aged 15-24 years, representing 19% of the world’s youth population. The same report mentions that Africa’s youth population did not reach its peak yet as it is the case in other regions of the world, and that by 2030, it is forecasted to grow by 42%. The same trend is also confirmed by the African Development Bank Group’s “Long-Term Strategy Briefing Note 4: Africa’s Demographic Trends” which mentions that the continent’s population aged 15-34 is set to grow from 358 million in 2010 to 540 Million in 2030. In addition, a joint World Bank Group and Agence Française de Développement (AFD) report states that in Africa, “each year between 2015 and 2035, there will be half a million more 15 year-old than the year before. Meanwhile, the population in the rest of the world is, or will soon be, aging.”¹

On the other hand, while Africa’s economies have been expanding and creating substantial wealth over the last two decades, the continent’s fast growing youth population have not been able to benefit in terms of jobs. The African Economic Outlook 2015 mentions that “current policies have not proved effective enough at speeding up job creation in productive sectors”² and continues by mentioning that “Africa’s transformation path will thus have to cross uncharted territory”, stressing the need for innovative policies and programmes that do not merely attempt to build on assumptions that worked elsewhere but harness the potential of the continent’s young population and other specificities for developing viable and impactful solutions that can transform Africa’s demographic transition into dividend rather than a source of social unrest and disaster.³

Whether Africa’s demographic explosion and its fast growing youth population will become a dividend will depend on what governments and their development partners and experts have to offer in terms of policies, strategies and programmes aiming at not only skilling and

¹ Youth employment in Sub-Saharan Africa. World Bank & Agence Française de Développement. 2014. p. 3.

² African Economic Outlook, 2015, p. XVI

³ Africa's Demographic Transition: Dividend or Disaster? World bank. 2015.

tooling African youth for employment and leadership but also creating the enabling environment for self-employment and enterprise, and also revisiting Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) / Technical and Vocational Skills Development (TVSD) provision in terms of aims, investments, programme design, offer and implementation.

The above is set as a priority for the African Union's Agenda 2063, which can be achieved through educated and skilled youth. To do so, the African Union Commission has developed a TVET Strategy (2013) and a Continental Education Strategy⁴ (2016) that placed skilling the youth to transform the continent as a top priority.

[The Second African Ministerial Forum](#) on the Integration of ICT in Education and Training (Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, 7th – 9th June, 2016) stressed the importance to accelerate ICT integration in education and training to develop 21st century skills, advance knowledge society and achieve Africa's Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Developments Goals (SDGs).

This said, How can the use of digital technology best be incorporated in policy and programmes to ensure that African youth are better tooled and skilled to lead, have access to jobs or become self-employed. What innovative initiatives and projects that leverage digital technologies for skilling youth in developing regions exist today which can inform policies and programmes in Africa? How can digital technologies be leveraged for transforming creative sectors into competitive industries and making traditional jobs more attractive and rewarding? And finally, what support should be developed to foster the creation of disruptive innovations required to reimagine TVET provision and pave the way to a more prosperous future for the youth?

The African Ministerial Forum on "Youth skills and enterprise in the digital era" will bring together senior policymakers, government administration senior officials, development partners, private sector, representatives of African youth, young entrepreneurs, civil society and experts to showcase, share and discuss comprehensive and innovative TVSD/TVET models and programmes that aim at developing the leadership and digital skills of the youth and equipping them with the necessary knowledge, tools and know-how to design marketable products and services and, therefore, create sustainable enterprises and generate employment.

2. Expected outcomes

1. Developing a shared and commanding understanding of how digital technologies can be leveraged for skilling the youth and empowering them to create enterprise in the digital era and lead the socio-economic transformation of their communities.

⁴ Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025 (CESA 16-25).

2. Sharing knowledge, experiences, good practices and lessons learnt to better inform policies and programmes aiming at skilling the youth and enterprise creation in the digital age.
3. Raising awareness on the necessity to build strong skill sets and volunteer political commitment to explore innovative approaches for leveraging digital technologies for youth skilling and enterprise creation.
4. Promoting youth digital skills and enterprise high level policy dialogue platform and network that includes the public sector (ministries, agencies and institutions in charge of vocational education and youth, Regional Economic Communities - RECs); development cooperation agencies and international organizations; private sector; civil society and youth organizations. Such a policy platform and network are necessary for the development of the ecosystem that will foster partnerships to advance policy and strategy development and implementation.
5. Sharing Youth's digital skills development and enterprise creation strategies to help address youth unemployment and bridging the skills gap within Africa by identifying game-changing experiences and lessons learnt.
6. Creating a platform for the promotion of the competitiveness and attractiveness of TVET sectors across Africa by identifying innovative and creative skills through an "African creative skills competition".

3. Structure of the forum

	17 April	Day 1 – 18 April	Day 2 – 19 April
knowledge fair		√	√
Sessions		Forum	Forum
Side events	Arrival of participants & CESA-ICT in Education cluster session meeting	√	√

4. Themes of the sessions

Day 1 – 18 Apr.

- **Morning session:**
 - Official opening
 - Keynote
 - Formal launch of the Skills Portal for Youth employment (SPYE) – AUC, NEPAD, GIZ
 - Coffee break
 - Session 1: Youth Session: Young Africans' perspectives on the future of skills and jobs

- **Afternoon sessions:**
 - Session 2: African Youth, digital competencies and creative media: “from skills to market” - New approaches for youth empowerment through digital skills and entrepreneurship: addressing the skills gap and fostering inclusive growth
 - Coffee break
 - Session 3: Empowering young women and girls through digital skills

Day 2 – 19 Apr.

- **Morning session:**
 - Session 4: Conventional and emerging technologies (Virtual Realities, Open Educational Resources, Gamification, Robotics, Open Badges, etc.) - trends in skilling youth for new and future jobs?
 - Coffee break
 - Session 5: Ministerial round table: Creating enabling environments to support skills development and boost the creation of new businesses
- **Afternoon session:**
 - Session 6 : life skills and citizenship education, redéfinir les programmes éducatifs pour assurer une transition réussie de l'apprentissage vers monde du travail
 - Coffee break
 - Session 7: Ministerial round table: Skills development provision that anticipates changes in jobs and meets the labour market needs
 - Official closing

5. Submission Guidelines

The Forum Programme Committee is composed of representatives of the African Union Commission’s Department of Human Resource Science and Technology, [Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization](#) (ISESCO), [Global e-Schools and Communities Initiative](#) (GESCI), Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), UNICEF and JP-IK. Please find here below, criteria guiding the Forum Programme Committee when reviewing proposals for presentations during the technical sessions and selecting presentations:

- Title of the presentation
- Role of the presenter in the project
- Region covered by the programme/project
- Alignment to the general theme and sessions
- Explanation concerning what is innovative in the programme/project
- Relevance in terms of development issue/challenge addressed by the programme/project
- Alignment to 2030 Global Agenda / Africa’s Agenda 2063 / AUC strategies / national policies and or other strategies
- Description of the MEL component of the programme/project
- Explanation on how the programme/project’s impact was measured

- Description of the lessons learned and their relevance in terms of informing policy / programmes

During every technical session, which lasts 90 minutes, 4 presentations of 15 min each will be made. Proposals for presentations can be made by email at tarek.chehidi@gesci.org

6. Important Dates

- Submission of presentation proposals - deadline: 17th Novembre 2017
- Selected applicants notified: 2nd January 2018
- Final Presentations due: 9th March 2018

7. Participation (by invitation only)

Around 120 participants are expected to attend the Forum:

- Government ministers in charge of Education, TVET, youth and employment;
- Representatives of leading international, regional organizations, private sector and civil society (African youth and young entrepreneurs);
- Youth and professional organizations;
- TVET centres;
- Experts.

8. Supporting the forum

The organization of the “African Ministerial Forum on Youth Skills and Enterprise in the Digital Era” is made possible because of the contributions made by co-organizers and supporting organizations. Your organization can support the forum by:

- Sponsoring the event
- Sponsoring the participation of delegates, presenters and experts

9. Reference documents

- African Union Agenda 2063
https://www.au.int/web/sites/default/files/pages/3657-file-agenda2063_popular_version_en.pdf
- AU Roadmap on Harnessing The Demographic Dividen Through Investments in Youth
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/OB8W5Tun1L4roRTRKZ3lwS041VE0>
- Continental Strategy for TVET to Foster Youth Employment
https://www.au.int/web/sites/default/files/newsevents/workingdocuments/30810-wd-tvet_strategy_english_-_final_4.pdf
- Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-23
https://www.au.int/web/sites/default/files/documents/29958-doc-cesa_-_english-v9.pdf
- Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024
<https://www.au.int/web/en/documents/29957/science-technology-and-innovation-strategy-africa-2024>

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