

The NEPAD Side Event on Skills Initiative for Africa

Theme: Creating Decent Employment for Peace and Security: What needs to be done?

Date: 20th September, 2016

Venue: Conference Room F, UN Headquarters, New York, USA

Concept Note and Agenda

NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency



Introduction/rationale

Half of Sub-Saharan Africa's population is under 25 years of age. According to the World Bank, each year an additional five million turn 15; while over half-a-million join the job-seeking group. However, much of the economies are not generating employment or even entrepreneurship opportunities to cater for these numbers of youth (let alone the elderly). On the other hand, the economic growth in much of Africa in the last two decades have raised a young population's expectations of good jobs without greatly expanding the capacity to deliver them. These are the conditions that make social protest and political instability likely. The implications and consequences are widespread. These include the desperate efforts to migrate which we are witnessing within and to beyond the continent.

Africa's Political leadership fully recognises the growing problem of youth unemployment as a major socio-economic development concern, while on the other hand appreciates and acknowledges the potential the youth population offers. These scenarios have influence the development of national and regional-continental development policies, strategies and initiatives, including in Agenda 2063, that have recognise the significance employment of the youth population could have in an economy – i.e. turning the large youthful population from being a problem to be solved to a resource to be harnessed in pursuit of accelerated economic growth and inclusive development.

Africa's response to these challenges is premised on the African Union's "Continental Strategy for TVET" as well as the "NEPAD Agency Policy Framework for Youth Development in Africa". Both policy frameworks aim to effectively rally increased political attention and action, catalyse policy alignment and attract increased investment financing in pursuit of the structural transformation – on one hand, raising the continent's capacity and ability to create new employment and economic opportunities for Africa's young populations, while on the other hand, offering opportunities to the youth to build desired skill capabilities and enhance their employability into a globally competitive and rapidly modernising labour market.

Within this context, one significant and active programme is the '**Skills Initiative for Africa**', led by the NEPAD Agency and the African Union Commission (AUC), in partnership with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and its German implementing agencies German Development Bank (KfW) and German International Cooperation (GIZ). Actual implementation will be undertaken in close collaboration with member state governments. The specific aim of the Skills Initiative Programme is to create new a positive outlook and future through increased employment and income opportunities for young people in Africa.

In the margins of the 71st United Nations General Assembly, the NEPAD Agency and partners are organizing a High Level Forum on Youth Employment and Skills Development to present the programme; engage, discuss and hear the experiences from various players and stakeholders on how issues of leadership, policies, and investments, can create opportunities for job creation and employment for youth in their home countries and positively contribute to the transformation of national economies. **The High level forum will take place on 20th September 2016 at the UN Headquarters, New York.**

Side Event Overall Purpose

Given the critical nature of youth employment in Africa, essentially as part of the critical human capital resource the continent needs to catalyse and sustain competitive economic growth and inclusive development, the overall purpose of the High level Forum is to expose and facilitate sharing on experiences and best practice in stimulating and supporting expansion of employment and economic opportunities for youth in Africa. The NEPAD Skills Initiative for Africa Programme will provide the main framework for the discussions also in the sense that the Programme offers opportunity for Africa Union led partnerships and collaboration is supporting sustainable and locally institutionalised efforts on youth employment.

The forum aims to also expose experiences and lessons from public and private sector policy reform, investment and institutional development efforts as well as from bilateral and multilateral experiences on issues of youth employment. The discussions will also reflect the general rural, urban and economic transformation scope.

Expected panellists and participants

The Side Event will bring together a cross section of high profile leaders, champions and practitioners from both public and private institutions across the globe.

Side Event Structure and Outline

The Side Event will be a high profile panel session and interactive moderated plenary discussions for about Two-and-half hours.

Time	AGENDA ITEM
13:15pm	<i>Introduction and Purpose of the Event</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Overview of the Event: Mrs. Estherine Fotabong, Director PICD, NEPAD Agency▪ Key Note Address: Dr. Ibrahim Mayaki, CEO, NEPAD Agency
13:30pm	High-level Panel Session: Moderator, Dr. Ibrahim Mayaki Panellists <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Dr. Carlos Lopes; Executive Secretary, UN Economic Commission for Africa▪ Dr. Alberic Kacou, Vice President, African Development Bank▪ Mr. Gilbert Hounbo; Deputy Director General, ILO▪ Ms Parminder Vir, CEO Elumelu Foundation▪ Mr. Pali Lehohla, Statistical General, South Africa
14:25pm	Closing Session: Synthesis - Dr Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, CEO, NEPAD Agency

Participation

The Event is opened to all. For more information, please contact the Vincent Oparah [vincento@nepad.org] with copy to Tendai Sithole at [tendait@nepad.org] and Pamla Gopaul [pamlaG@nepad.org]