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This first newsletter was planned and put together before the COVID-19 pandemic has hit the world. Things have changed over the last weeks: Half of mankind is in some kind of lockdown at the moment. SIFA Technical Component (SIFA-TC) and SIFA Financing Facility (SIFA-FC) have already modified and changed some of their activities as a reaction to the pandemic. We are brainstorming together with the implementing agencies AUDA-NEPAD

and AUC on how to react to the pandemic in our area of work in the most appropriate way. We make sure that business continuity is guaranteed and at the same time we are looking into options how SIFA-TC and SIFA-FC can refocus its programmes on the pandemic. Having said this, we do not want to disregard all the good work that has been done before the crisis hit us all. So, please read this newsletter keeping this in mind.

SIFA - SKILLS INITIATIVE FOR AFRICA

This newsletter reports on highlights of the work done by the Skills Initiative for Africa, SIFA Technical Component and SIFA Financing Facility. It will be published on a four-monthly basis and shared with its commissioning parties and other stakeholders.

Africa's young population is rapidly growing and expected to double to over 830 million by 2050. The continent has the youngest population in the world and the youth labour force is growing rapidly: it is expected to grow by 35% by 2030 when it will reach almost 170 million young people. Although economic growth has increased steadily since 2016, it has failed to translate into shared prosperity. Furthermore, dynamic economic growth alone is not enough to create the approximately 12 million new jobs needed every year in Africa to absorb new labour market entrants.

SIFA - Skills Initiative for Africa promotes occupational prospects of young Africans through the support of innovative skills development programmes and close cooperation with the private sector as an integral key stakeholder in the creation of jobs. SIFA is an initiative of the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) supported by the German Government and the European Union.



SIFA - FINANCING FACILITY






Financing mechanisms


Through AUDA-NEPAD, the Financing Facility for Skills Development is designed to coherently address the common challenges in skills development to support innovative and sustainable approaches. The Financing Facility provides funding on a competitive basis.








Funding Windows


WINDOW I
Currently no open calls for proposals.

<p>THEMATIC AREA</p>  <p>Large skills development investment projects proposed by training entities in partnership with companies</p>	<p>GRANT AMOUNT</p>  <p>Up to EUR 3 Million per Project</p>	<p>ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS</p>  <p>National training entities in partnership with private sector entities</p>
<p>APPLICANT CONTRIBUTION</p>  <p>At least 10 % of total project cost/investment</p>	<p>PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD</p>  <p>36 to 40 Months</p>	









WINDOW II
Currently no open calls for proposals.

<p>THEMATIC AREA</p>  <p>Large skills development investment projects</p>	<p>GRANT AMOUNT</p>  <p>Between EUR 1 million and EUR 1.5 million per Project</p>	<p>ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS</p>  <p>International company with training activities in partnership with domestic public or private accredited training provider</p>
<p>APPLICANT CONTRIBUTION</p>  <p>At least 30 % of total project cost/investment</p>	<p>PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD</p>  <p>24 to 30 Months</p>	



WINDOW III
Currently no open calls for proposals.

<p>THEMATIC AREA</p>  <p>Innovative skills projects</p>	<p>GRANT AMOUNT</p>  <p>Between EUR 0.2 and 1 million</p>	<p>ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS</p>  <p>Domestic public or private entity. If the Lead is public then one of the partners must be a private entity</p>
<p>APPLICANT CONTRIBUTION</p>  <p>At least 10 % of total project cost/investment</p>	<p>PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD</p>  <p>Up to 24 months</p>	



Three funding windows are designed for different strategies: Funding Windows I and II are designed for large investment projects including construction or rehabilitation of vocational schools and equipment of training facilities, the third Funding Window will support smaller, innovative projects. For further information visit www.skillsafrica.org

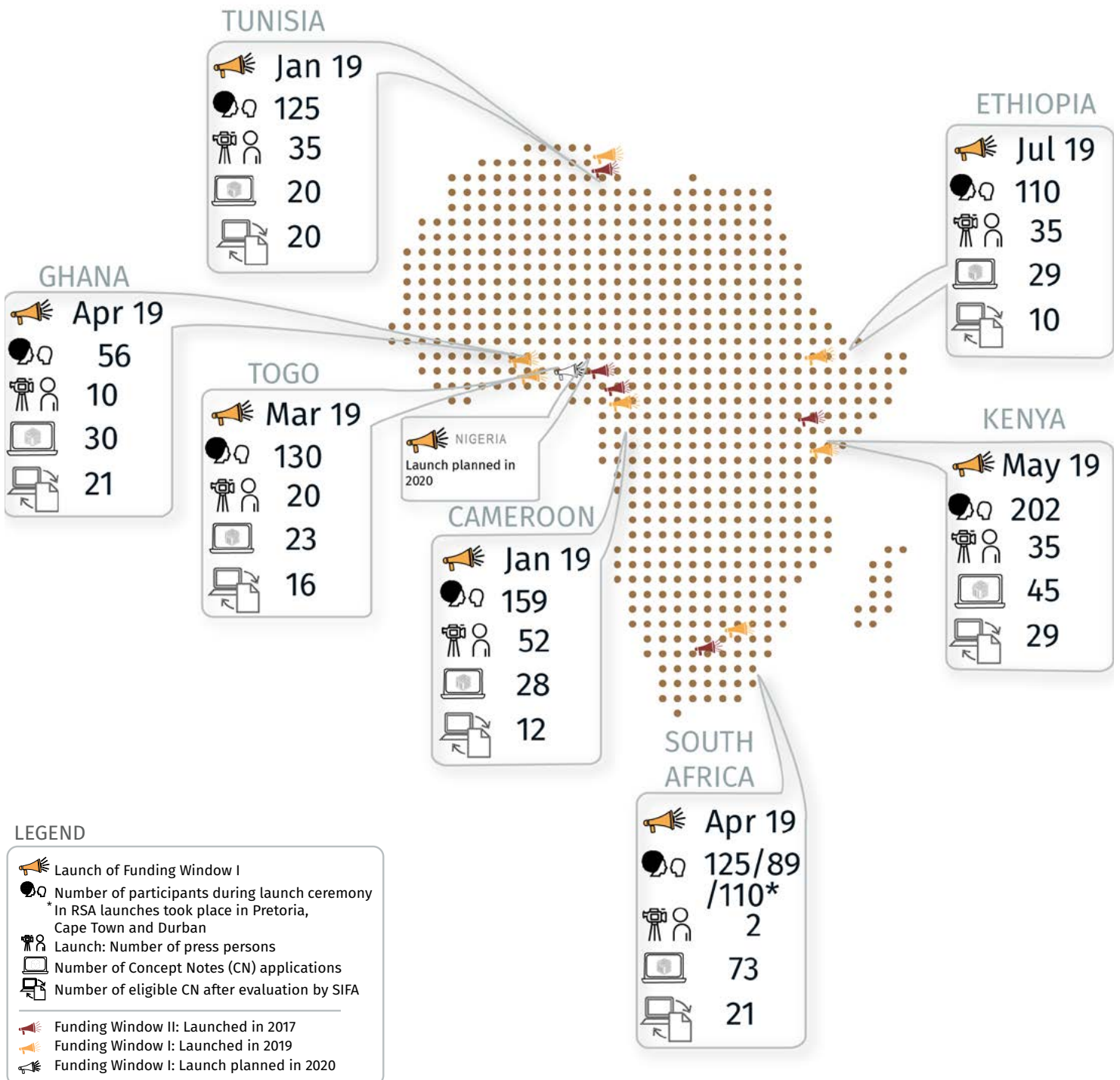


SIFA - FINANCING FACILITY

LAUNCH OF FUNDING WINDOW I

Funding Window I has to date been launched in 7 out of 8 participating countries, where a large number of applicants have submitted Concept Notes. These Concept Notes have been evaluated and in each country, the three best Concept Notes have been selected for the shortlist.

The SIFA Financing Facility has so far being implemented in Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Togo and Tunisia.





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FUNDING WINDOW I WORK IN PROGRESS

Currently shortlisted applicants are invited to a workshop, before they proceed to the second phase of the selection process, the Full Proposal.

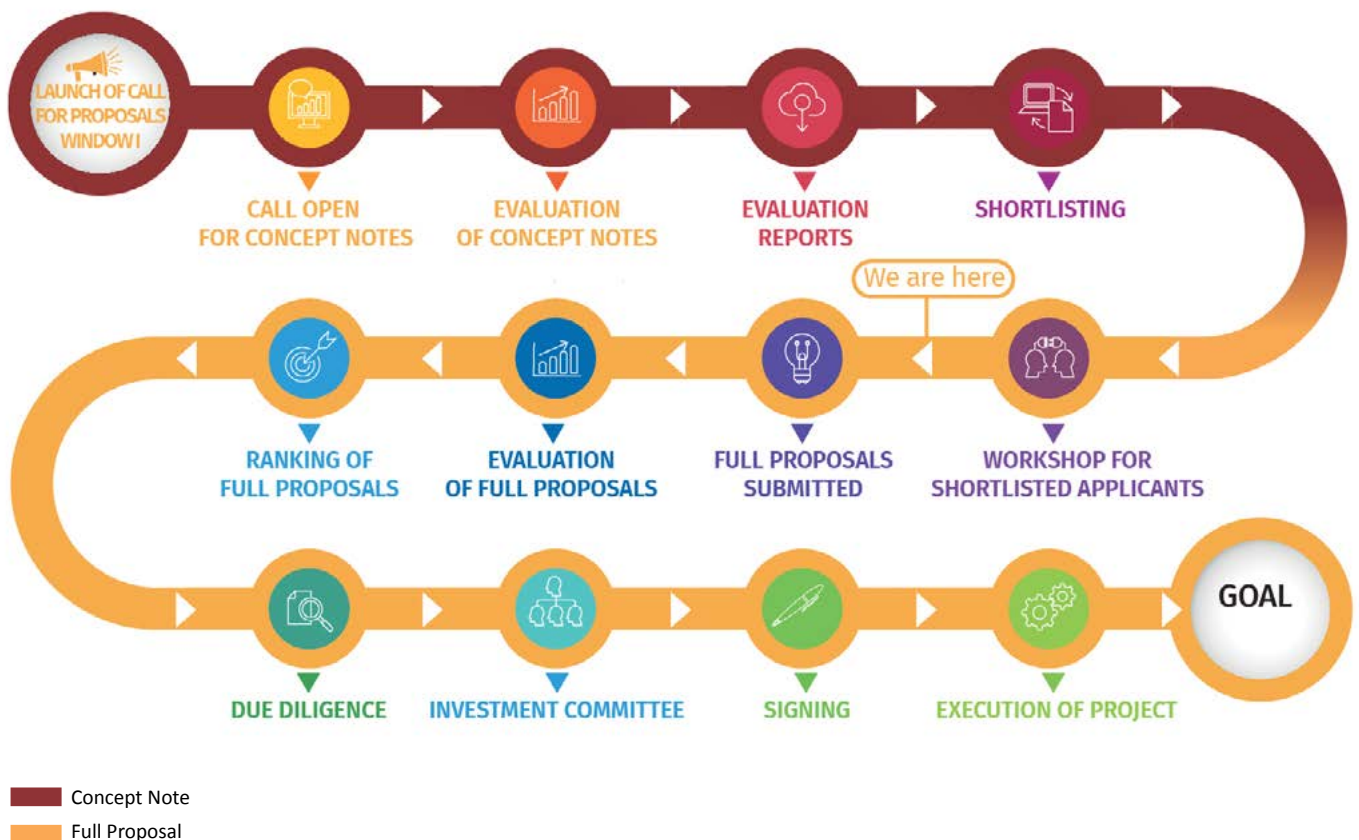
The shortlisted projects that are invited to submit Full Proposals for **Funding Window I** represent a diversity of sectors and incorporate competence training for work readiness and digital transformation.

These projects include construction/rehabilitation of workshops, installation of new equipment, scholarships for students and training of youth in industrial maintenance, aqua-culture, food safety along the food chain, agricultural mechanisation, water and energy installations and maintenance, IT (including programming and app development).



Students in a TVET wood workshop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
© SIFA / Sabina von Kessel, 2019.

FWI Timeline





SIFA - FINANCING FACILITY

FUNDING WINDOW I WORKSHOPS



Top: SIFA team with shortlisted applicants in the workshop in Tunis, March 2020. ©SIFA, 2020

Right: Shortlisted Applicants in the workshop in Addis Ababa, March 2020. © SIFA, 2020

Workshop for shortlisted Applicants

Two full proposal development workshops were organised for applicants of the three top-ranked shortlisted concept notes from the SIFA participating countries who have been selected after evaluation to proceed to the next stage of the grant approval process. The workshops were held in Tunis and Addis Ababa for French-speaking and English-speaking applicants respectively. The workshop in Tunis was attended by applicants from Cameroon, Tunisia and Togo while applicants from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya and South Africa participated in the Addis Ababa workshop. The Tunis workshop was held on 3 – 4 March while the Addis Ababa workshop took place on 16 – 17 March 2020. In all, 38 lead applicants and primary partners participated in both workshops.

The key objective of the workshops was to support the shortlisted applicants to develop full proposals that meet the requirements of SIFA.

Workshop Participants present during the workshops were representative of AUDA-NEPAD, representatives of the host ministry of education and TVET, SIFA focal points, lead applicants of the shortlisted proposals, primary partners of the shortlisted proposals, from the Fund Management Team (FMT), the team leader, project manager, skills development expert, architect,

procurement expert, country consultants, and a representative from SIFA TC.

At both workshops, representatives of the host country ministry responsible for education and TVET gave the opening remarks, after which the Representative of AUDA-NEPAD, Ms Unami Mpfu, outlined the objective of the workshop. She disclosed that, based on the discussions during the last SIFA Steering Committee meeting, it was the intention to support both the 1st and the 2nd ranked proposal. This announcement was well received by the shortlisted applicants. This information is expected to contribute to raising the quality of the full proposals.

As part of the workshop programme, the applicants were required to make brief presentations of their proposals for knowledge sharing purposes only and not as an evaluation parameter. After the project presentations, the Applicants were introduced to the modalities for submission of the Full Proposal in SmartME.

The discussions that followed were insightful and lively with the participants asking relevant questions and raising several issues for clarification by the FMT.



SIFA - FINANCING FACILITY

FUNDING WINDOW II

For Funding Window II applicants have been selected which work in the following sectors: mining, metalworking, pneumatics and hydraulics, renewable energy, technical engineering and automation.



Similar to **Funding Window I**, **Funding Window II** is designed to support sustainable skills development initiatives, which are spread regionally and be incorporated into national strategies with the perspective of improving quality and promoting innovation for employment-oriented skills development. The selection of beneficiaries and projects follows a criteria-based, transparent approach. Women and youth from low income groups shall preferably benefit from the projects financed by SIFA. Essentially, FW II is tailored for international companies with a strong vested interest to invest in skills development in African countries, together with a local partner.

At the moment the contract negotiations with the different international companies are ongoing.

The start of the first project supported by SIFA is planned for April 2020. This project will supply industry and labour market including self-employment with qualified engineers and technicians covering installation, maintenance, repair and potentially manufacturing of equipment in the broader context of renewable energy. In order to achieve this objective, the Facility will finance the rehabilitation of and equipment for three specialized training classrooms in an existing entire two storey building.

SIFA - FINANCING FACILITY

FUNDING WINDOW III



SYSTEMS
&
PROCESSES



SIFA seeks to fund innovative ways of providing employment oriented skills development in response to the changed needs after Covid-19. For this purpose SIFA will through its **Funding Window III**, open regional calls (Africa) for proposals.



SIFA - TECHNICAL COMPONENT

LEADERSHIP DIALOGUE FOR SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT IN AFRICA



Johannesburg, South Africa / 19 June 2019 - ‘Making TVET systems work for employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for the next generation of African Youth,’ was the theme of the Leadership Dialogue for Skills and Employment which took place in Johannesburg, South Africa. Organised by the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD), with support from the on-going GIZ SIFA and ATVET programmes, the dialogue saw the participation of representatives from the following countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda,

Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Sierra Leone and South Africa. At the Leadership Dialogue, Permanent Secretaries (Director Generals) in government ministries and policy makers exchanged learning and ideas to improve delivery of TVET in their countries. It was agreed that the transformation of the TVET sector will require

the collective efforts of policymakers, practitioners, private sector and ultimately the youth them-selves to co-create TVET pathways that ensure that the TVET sector delivers competent workers and entrepreneurs able to contribute towards the 4th Industrial revolution.



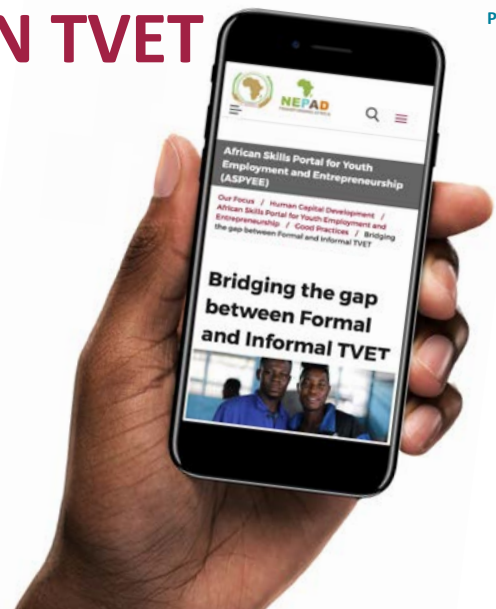
Participants of the Leadership Dialogue in Johannesburg, © AUDA-NEPAD

SIFA - TECHNICAL COMPONENT

HEARING THE VOICES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND PRACTITIONERS IN TVET AND EMPLOYMENT

The African Union Development Agency-NEPAD has set up a continental knowledge sharing platform called ASPYEE which is aimed at disseminating knowledge on successful practices for addressing youth unemployment. In order to increase and strengthen the knowledge base of the portal, SIFA developed a concept to capture the voices of the private sector and various stakeholders.

The purpose of this assignment was to obtain information on TVET interventions, stakeholders and innovations in the following four countries; Ghana, Nigeria, Cote d’Ivoire and Senegal. Furthermore, the aim was to document the needs and challenges of these stakeholders pertaining to TVET, skills development and youth employment. Through this assignment several video clips of good practice examples and the private sector voices were produced and these were made available both in French and English. The video clips were subsequently published on the ASPYEE portal to be openly accessible to various stakeholders in the African Continent.



ASPYEE: African good practices for addressing youth unemployment, © AUDA-NEPAD

The Go To Portal for African-owned good practices: ASPYEE
(<https://nepad.org/skillsportalfor youth>)

Two examples can be found here:

<https://www.nepad.org/skillsportalfor youth/good-practice/private-sector-voices-senegal>

<https://www.nepad.org/skillsportalfor youth/good-practice/bridging-gap-between-formal-and-informal-tvet>

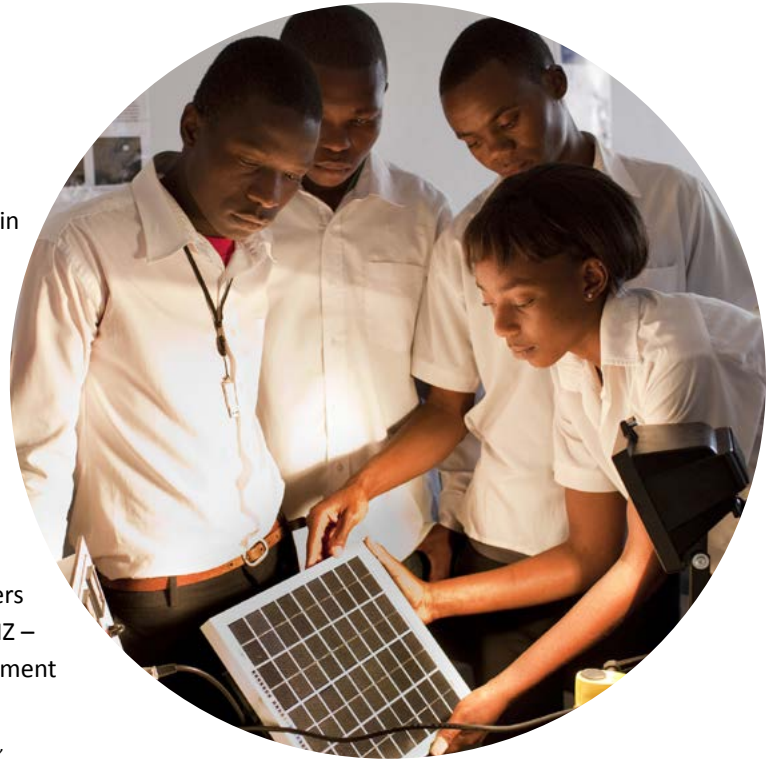
SIFA - TECHNICAL COMPONENT

KICK-OFF FOR DEVELOPING THE 'AFRICAN CONTINENTAL QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK' (ACQF)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia / 02 - 04 September 2019

From September 02-04, 2019 the Inaugural Workshop and first Advisory Group meeting for developing the African Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF) took place at the African Union in Addis Ababa. The event was opened by H.E. Sarah Anyang, AUC Commissioner for HRST and Anna Burylo, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to the AU. The two events marked the starting point of a highly participative process under the political leadership of the AUC. More than 70 representatives from the AU member states, RECs, regional associations, social partners and international agencies participated. With the ACQF the African Union aspires to create a policy instrument which contributes to enhance comparability, quality, recognition and transparency of qualifications as well as portability of skills and mobility of learners and workers. Under the SIFA program – co-funded by EU and BMZ – GIZ in cooperation with the ETF supports the AUC in the development process of the ACQF.

Photo: Apprenticeship Electrical Engineering at Institut Industrial de Maputo in Mozambique, © GIZ/photothek.net/Ute Grabowsky



SIFA - TECHNICAL COMPONENT

TOKYO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT (TICAD)

Yokohama, Japan / August 2019

On request of BMZ and after consultation with AUDA-NEPAD, SIFA-TC organized a side event on “Skills for Jobs in Africa – Building Strategic Partnerships to harvest the Demographic Dividend” at the TICAD conference in Yokohama, Japan. The side event featured a panel discussion with AUDA-NEPAD CEO, Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, Deputy Director General Mr. Christoph Rauh (BMZ), Dr. Izumi Ohno, Director Research Institute of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The discussion was well attended and considered a success. Participants discussed the state of skills development in Africa, challenges and opportunities, and possible areas of cooperation. As an outcome of the side event discussions between BMZ and JICA on cooperation are ongoing.



From left: Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki (CEO AUDA-NEPAD), Symerre Grey Johnson (Director of Operations AUDA-NEPAD), Christoph Rauh (Deputy Director General BMZ) in Yokohama at the TICAD side event on Skills for Jobs in Africa, © 2019 GIZ GmbH/Sabine Klaus.

SIFA - TECHNICAL COMPONENT

AUC'S INNOVATING EDUCATION IN AFRICA



Gaborone, Botswana / 20 – 22 August 2019

SIFA TC supported the Second Edition of the AUC's Innovating Education in Africa Expo which was held from 20 - 22 August 2019 in Gaborone, Botswana. The Expo showcased ICT based innovative education solutions from across the continent, thereby raised the visibility of education innovators and innovative practices so that they can be supported, upscaled, replicated or further developed. The event also provided a platform for various stakeholders to exchange experiences, policies and challenges in enhancing education and learning outcomes through ICT. About 450 participants from over forty countries attended the event. Besides a SIFA exhibition booth and a successful panel discussion under the ACJ umbrella, SIFA TC was also part of the innovation competition jury and is now supporting two of the prize winners financially.



TVET Student in Ghana, © 2019 GIZ GmbH/Olivier Sabatier.

SIFA - TECHNICAL COMPONENT

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING - OPENING DOORS TO DECENT WORK



Dar es Salaam, Tanzania / 12 – 13 November 2019 -

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process used by regulatory bodies, adult learning centres, career development practitioners, military organizations, human resource professionals, employers, training institutions, colleges and universities around the world to identify, access and certify a person's knowledge, skills and competencies acquired in non-formal and informal learning, such as work or life experiences, against prescribed standards or learning outcomes. RPL is practiced for purposes of an individual's standing in a profession, trades qualifications, academic achievement, recruitment, performance management, career and succession planning.

In Tanzania, ILO worked with the Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) to develop an RPL system which allows those who have informal training to be assessed and certified based on their competencies. The certificates awarded through



TVET Student in Addis Ababa ©SIFA/Sabina von Kessel 2019

RPL open doors to decent work, registration of business, licensing of operations and accessing further training in formal education centers. Furthermore, workers now report promotions, awards of permanent contracts and improved pay because their wages are now classified. The skills validation is primarily done through assessments of their claimed competencies against prescribed national competency standards clustered around employable modules. The RPL process has gained instant popularity in the country both from the target groups (informal apprentices), companies and government.

In a writeshop conducted in November 2019 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, stakeholders from government agencies from Kenya (KNQA, NITA), Private Sector, ICT innovators, ILO and GIZ agreed on the need to design and adopt innovative means through which RPL assessments and other processes can be implemented quicker, in a more cost effective manner while maintaining the quality.

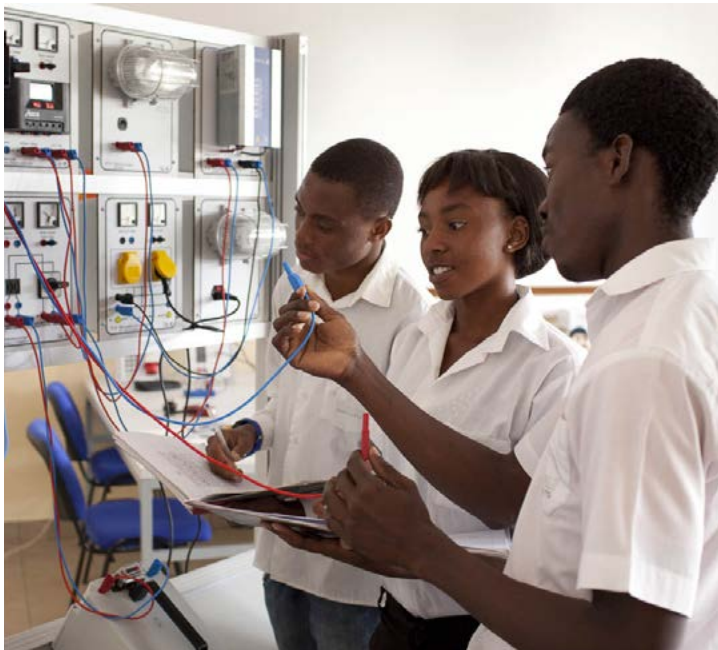
The stakeholders further agreed to explore opportunities presented through digital platforms to facilitate better RPL process outcomes.



The Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) organised the writeshop together with ILO Tanzania and is looking forward to engaging further in this topic and to encouraging a discussion on a regional and continental level. As one of the first steps, Kenya will chair an RPL session on ASPYEE and interested country representatives will be invited to join the discussion.

SIFA - TECHNICAL COMPONENT

THE AFRICAN PLAN OF ACTION FOR YOUTH EMPOWERMENT (APAYE)



Apprenticeship Electrical Engineering at Institut Industrial de Maputo in Mozambique, © GIZ/ photothek.net/Ute Grabowsky

End of 2019 the AUC presented their African Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (APAYE). This strategy paper seeks to harmonize the different AU frameworks in the thematic area of youth empowerment and provide guidance to all stakeholders – including Member States, RECs and development partners – for implementation and strategy planning over the next 5 years.

The SIFA program used their annual Team Workshop end of November 2019 to analyze the new strategy guideline together with partners from AUC and AUDA-NEPAD to align activities and outcomes accordingly. All participants agreed that SIFA’s objectives already respond to the core issues of APAYE: SIFA contributes directly to the main theme of Education and Employment for Youth and does particularly – as demanded explicitly in APAYE – support skills development by convening stakeholders, providing support for member states and providing a platform for knowledge exchange and sharing of best practices. As a next step it was agreed that SIFA will adjust the monitoring system to effectively promote these efforts and feed into the reporting mechanisms of the Action Plan.

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