

REGIONAL

ACJ

AFRICA CREATES JOBS

2021

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

16-17 AUG

EAST AFRICA



Skills for the Future

Collaborating

Hearing all voices

Youth Divident

Informal Skills Acquisition

Labour Market Information

Digitization

By Africa 4 Africa

Skills and Jobs
for East Africa's Economic Growth

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East Africa Regional ACJ

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

August 16th & 17th 2021, 10:00 a.m. – 13:00 p.m. (EAT)

Full report

This programme is co-funded by the European Union and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

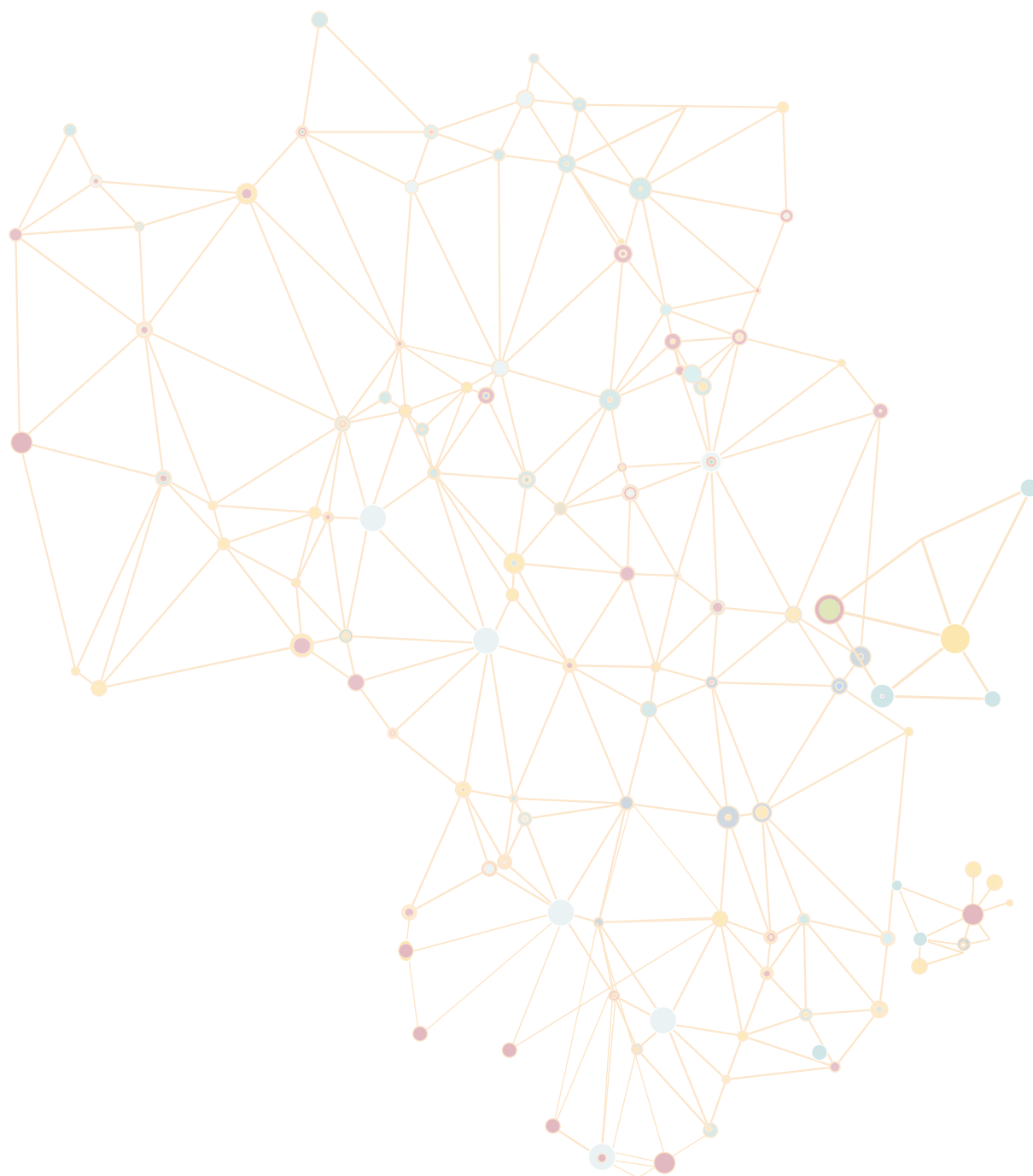


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Authors

STRATEGIES! Consulting Firm
Kah Walla



1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA), together with its partners the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), held the East-African Regional Africa Creates Jobs (R-ACJ) on the 16th & 17th of August 2021. Other key partners included Business Africa (BA) and East African Community.

Five R-ACJ online workshops will be conducted and serve as a prelude to the Continental Africa Creates Jobs (ACJ) conference to be held in November 2021. The East Africa Regional ACJ was the first of the 5 regional workshops.

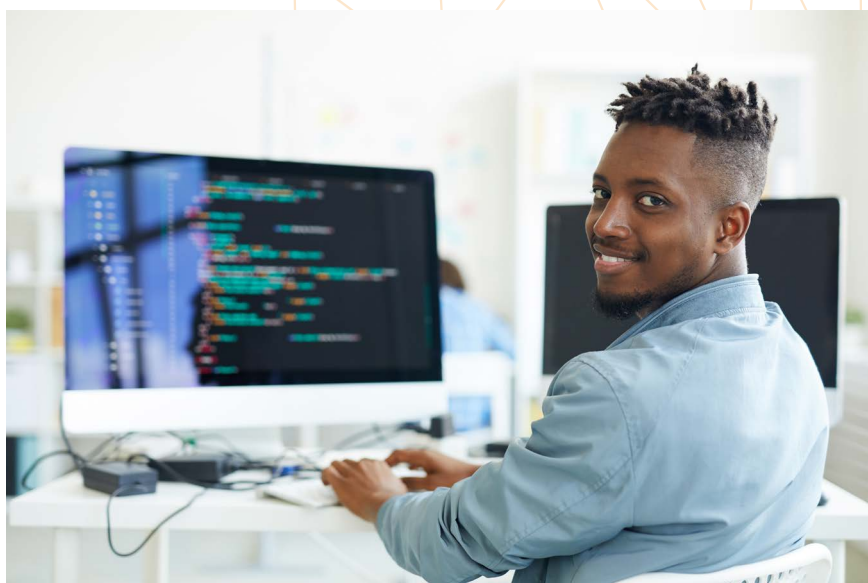
1.1. Workshop purpose

The five R-ACJs aimed to bring 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 SIFA conducted Macro-Economic Studies done in five countries and Rapid Skills Assessments in eight countries. The workshop sessions furthermore aimed to create a dialogue platform at regional level where diverse stakeholders could engage on possible solutions and recommendations. The engagements spotlighted strengthening the skills development system and increasing prospects of (self) employment of young people for the region, within the context of the findings.

1.2. Continental ACJ

The Continental ACJ will be held in November 2021. The theme of this year's continental dialogue platform is ***“Driving a responsive and agile skills and jobs agenda for economic growth for African Youth”***. This theme will enable key stakeholders to explore how Africa's envisaged growth, as articulated in the African Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), in a COVID-19 environment, can meet the skills demand for the over 20 million jobs that the continent needs every year.

Information from the regional workshops is meant to guide investment decisions by Member States as they identify sub-sectors prone to boost employment. The regional lessons learned are in the process of being aggregated to feed into the continental ACJ in November 2021.



2. WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

About 90 stakeholders attended the East Africa online discussion from the business community, higher education, TVET and secondary schools, civil society, youth organizations and policy makers.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE EAST-AFRICA R-ACJ ONLINE WORKSHOP

The workshop was scheduled in two three-hour sessions over a two-day period.

3.1. Day 1 Proceedings

Opening session

The first day started with welcome remarks from officials and the description of the framework of the workshop. Below are a few quotes from their inputs:

- **Dr. James Otieno Jowi**, *Principal Education Officer, East African Community*, "We are the continent which is the most youthful. We have a very big youth advantage and this youthful population for now is a challenge but also an opportunity that if well utilized can be a very turning point for the transformation of the continent.
- **Mr. Hambani Masheleni**, *Head of Education Division, African Union Commission*, "If we strategically empower our youth, we will create the Africa that we want. That is what the agenda 2063 is all about"

Context setting: Macroeconomic trends¹

The remainder of the session focused on the presentation of macroeconomic trends at both the continental and regional levels. The main input document presented was a summary of the Macro-economic analysis and Rapid Skills Assessment Reports which were undertaken by SIFA in 8 African Union Member States, with possible scenarios of job growth potential along national productive sectors on one hand; and trends² compiled from international organizations and institutions such as the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the International Labour Organization on the other. The aim was to get a concrete idea of the dynamics on the ground with clear facts and data, to support the decision-making process.

In a nutshell, the presentation stipulated that there is urgency to create at least 16-20 million jobs per year on the continent to respond to the annual demographic growth of youth that need jobs. The COVID-19 crisis has increased this urgency as it has resulted in slowed economic growth and job losses.

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
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- https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms_771731.pdf
- <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/eastern-africa-population/>
- <https://www.oecd.org/publications/africa-s-development-dynamics-2018-9789264302501-en.htm>



In addition, the structure of the labour market shows that most of the labour force is involved in agriculture and that most jobs are informal creating a challenge for decent employment. The studies also demonstrate that it is possible for Africa as a continent and East Africa as a region to create jobs and meet these needs.

This can happen if East Africa focuses on key growth sectors and bridges the skills gap in these key sectors.

For more details, please see the full presentation attached to this report.

3.2. Day 2 Proceedings

Day two was focused on key recommendations for demand and employment-oriented skills development and job creation in key sectors for economic growth. Stakeholders dialogued to modify, complete, and prioritize these recommendations as well as to specify the conditions for their successful implementation.

Group discussion focus

The discussion during the Regional ACJ was focused on the following points:

- **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.**

The following key questions were discussed:

- **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 SADC in facilitating economic growth and job creation?**

Group discussion outputs:

In four different groups, participants discussed and came up with the final recommendations below to be sent as input to the Continental ACJ 2021 event. While the table below reflects actions/interventions appropriate to particular stakeholder groups, the workshop reiterated the need for consistent collaboration across and amongst the stakeholders to effectively take forward these recommendations.

	TVET Authorities, TVET & Other training institutions	Private sector	Government
Enhance skills development			
National level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement between TVET centres 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"> • 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"> • 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
Regional level	<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. 	<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). 	

	TVET Authorities, TVET & Other training institutions	Private sector	Government
Job creation			
National level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership between TVET centres and private companies for training in specific skills. • Strengthen private TVET centres for the creation of centres of excellence and innovation. • Empower existing TVETs to recognize prior learning of artisans acquired informally. 		<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.
Regional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure qualifications delivered are aligned to international standards. 		
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. 			

You can find the full outcomes in the document attached.

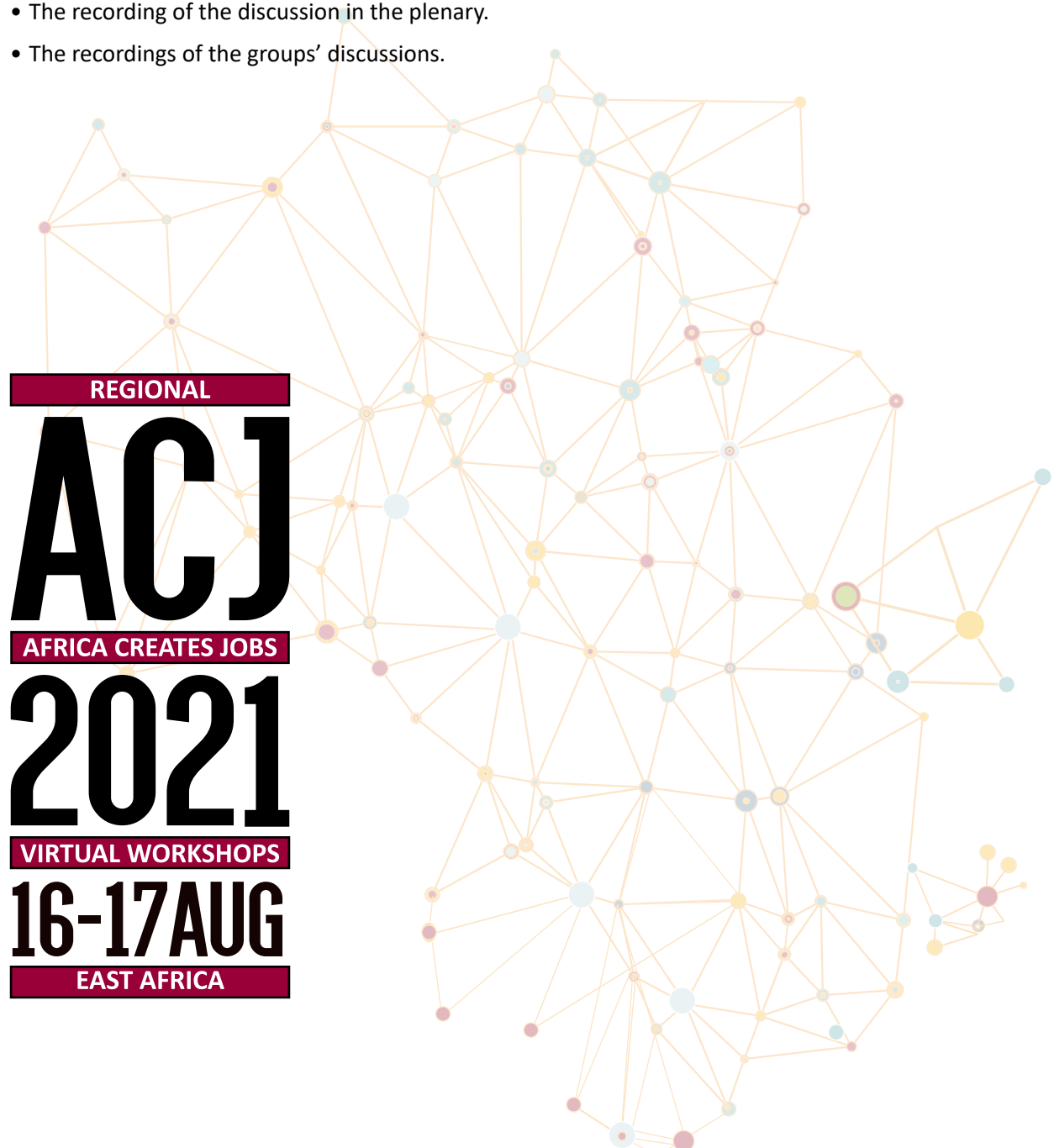
4. CONCLUSION

The East Africa Regional ACJ enjoyed a high-level of engagement from the diverse participants.

Results of macroeconomic studies and COVID-19 rapid skills assessment were presented to participants. They discussed employment in the informal sector as well as the key recommendations that were formulated for jobs creation and skills development in the region. The output of that discussion has been captured to be merged with the outputs of the other Regional ACJs and feed into the continental ACJ.

ANNEXURES

- Presentation on the Macro-economic and regional trends in the East Africa Region.
- The recording of the discussion in the plenary.
- The recordings of the groups' discussions.



This report is published by SIFA - Skills Initiative for Africa, an initiative of the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD).

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

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