

REGIONAL

ACJ

AFRICA CREATES JOBS

2021

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

7-8 OCT

NORTH AFRICA



Northern Africa Regional ACJ
“Skills and Jobs for Northern Africa’s Economic Growth”.

October 07th & 08th 2021, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (GMT)

Full report

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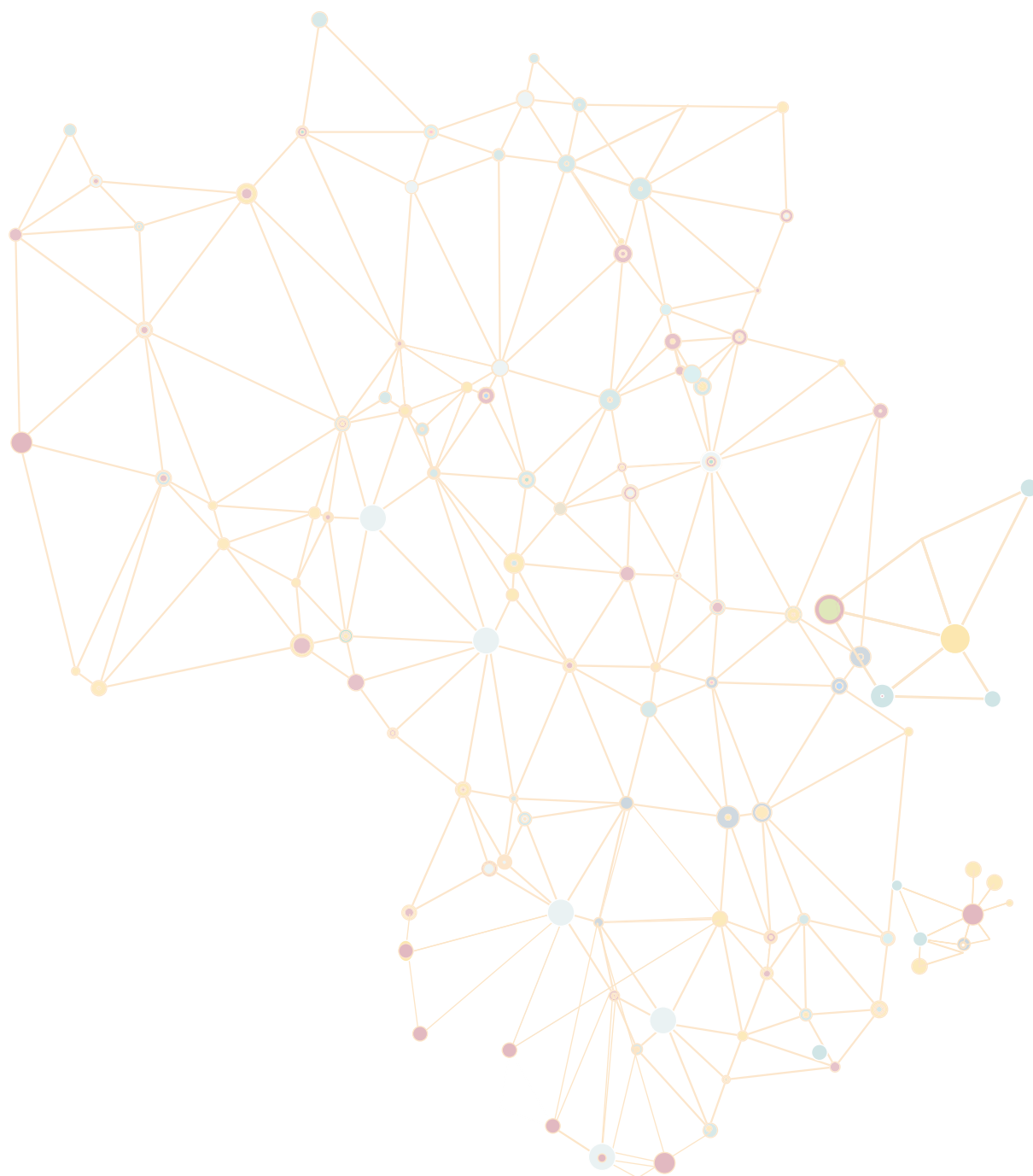


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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

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 Northern African Regional Africa Creates Jobs (R-ACJ) on the 07th & 08th of October 2021. Other key partners included Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA) and Business Africa through its chairperson, Mrs. Neghza Saida.

Five R-ACJ online workshops were to be conducted and serve as a prelude to the Continental Africa Creates Jobs (ACJ) conference to be held in November 2021. The Northern Africa Regional ACJ was the fifth of the 5 regional workshops, the previous ones having been held in East Africa - 16th & 17th August 2021, in West Africa - 26th & 27th August 2021, in Central Africa - 2nd & 3rd September 2021 and in Southern Africa - 22nd & 23rd September 2021.

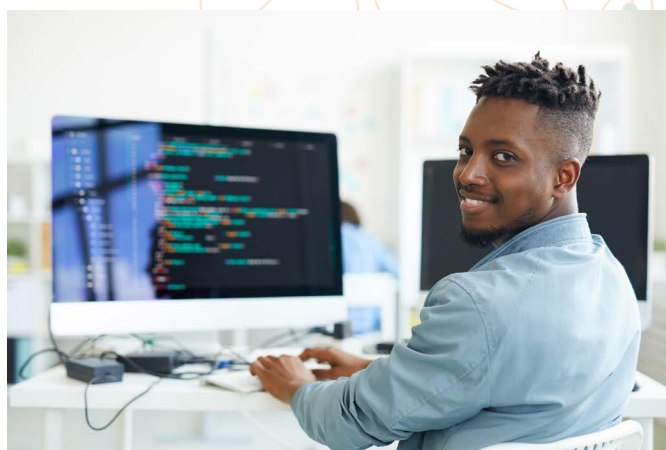
1.1. Workshop purpose

The five R-ACJs aimed at bringing 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 at creating 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 30 stakeholders attended the Northern Africa online discussion from the business community, higher education, TVET and secondary schools, civil society, youth organizations and policy makers.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE NORTHERN 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:

- **Mrs. Neghza Saida**, Chairperson, Business Africa (BA): *“There is an urgent need to establish a socio-economic dialogue and to combine the efforts of all the actors concerned. This starts with improving the quality of education and vocational/university training, whose curricula must be reviewed together in order to meet the actual and real needs of the world of work.”*
- **Mr. Hambani Masheleni**, Senior Policy Officer Human Resources, Science and Technology Department – AUC: *“We need to come up with measures that help the youth reskill, upskill and adapt to this fast-changing world of work.”*

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 Labor 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. In addition, the structure of the labour market shows that most of the labour force at the level of the continent is involved in agriculture and that most jobs are informal creating

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

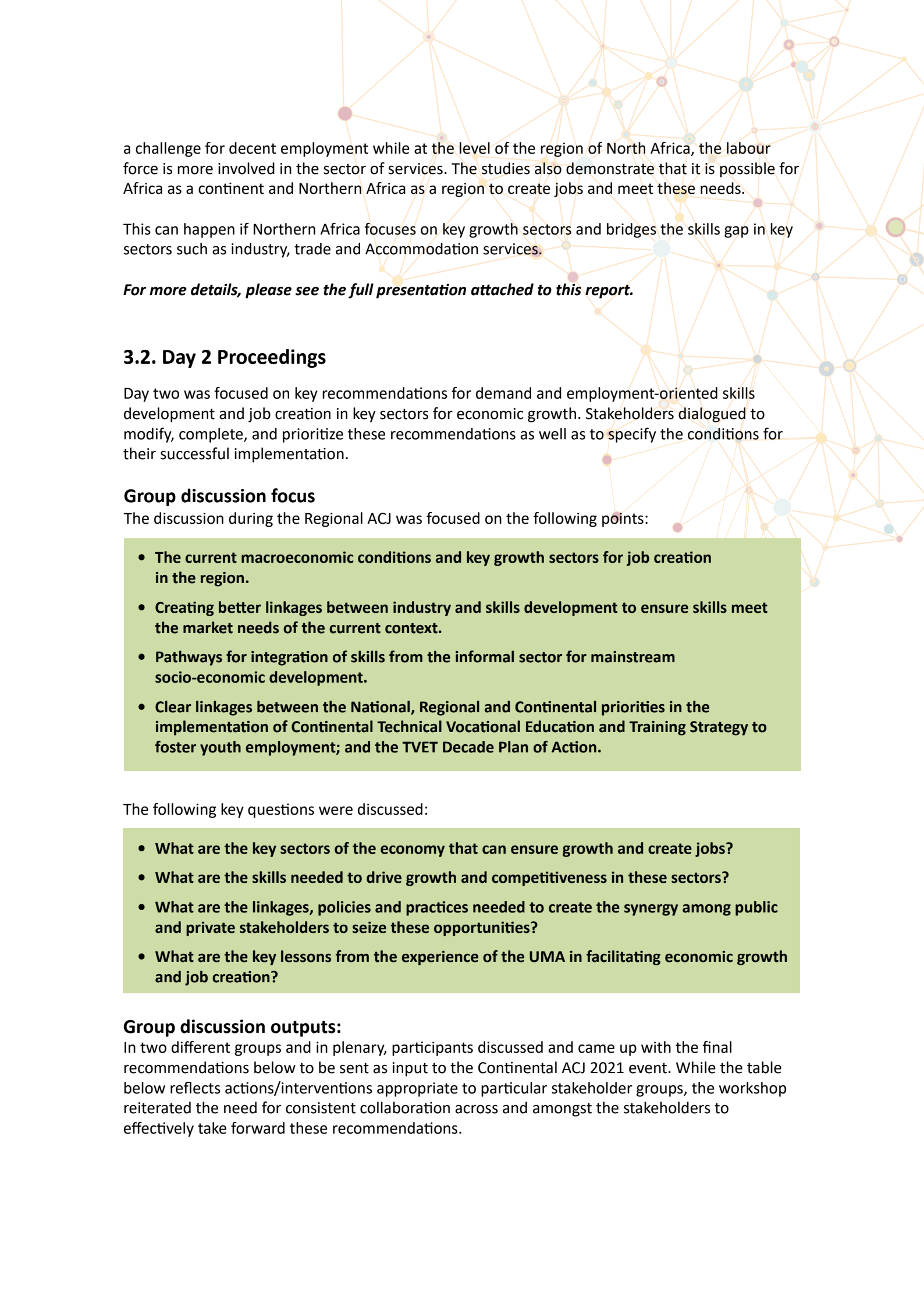
- https://www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracenorg/Content/Publications/AfCFTA-youth_FINAL_PRINT_3.pdf

- 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.oecd.org/publications/africa-s-development-dynamics-2018-9789264302501-en.htm>



a challenge for decent employment while at the level of the region of North Africa, the labour force is more involved in the sector of services. The studies also demonstrate that it is possible for Africa as a continent and Northern Africa as a region to create jobs and meet these needs.

This can happen if Northern Africa focuses on key growth sectors and bridges the skills gap in key sectors such as industry, trade and Accommodation services.

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 UMA in facilitating economic growth and job creation?**

Group discussion outputs:

In two different groups and in plenary, 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"> • Revise the branches of orientation from secondary school to university. • Make a diagnosis of the needs of the different regions of the country to harmonise 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 centres and the companies (case of Tunisia). » Evaluate current and future needs in manpower. » Designing and developing programmes 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. » Generalising distance/digital training. • Ensure pedagogical and technical upgrading of teachers and trainers of trainers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop agreements between centres 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 centres, programmes. » Implementation of programmes - involving professionals. » Funding TVET which will also lead to more involvement. • Establish academic internship programmes for learners. • Improve continuous training for the preservation of workers' jobs. • Harmonise/coordinate the activities of employers' organisations for better advocacy in collaboration with workers' unions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up a PPP platform. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Awareness-raising programme to increase young people's interest in TVET and not in continuing education. • More awareness also of the private sector which should welcome future learners. • Improving TVET regulatory frameworks in countries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Quality of training and » Adequacy with the needs of the employment sector (Synergy between TVET, Higher Education & Labour Market). • Create mechanisms to support access to employment / a qualification framework respecting the needs of the labour market. • Consensus between governments and social partners on the conditions for decent work. • Developing short complementary training courses for higher education graduates to access jobs requiring moderate qualifications. • Communication and awareness-raising in society on the importance of vocational skills. • 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 labour market needs. • Define incentives to encourage companies to host students for study or academic placements.

	TVET Authorities, TVET & Other training institutions	Private sector	Government
Enhance skills development			
National level			<p><u>Paradigm to review!?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills development: 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.
Regional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop training specialities 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. • Harmonise the recognition of diplomas - Encourage co-certification. • Standardise the nomenclature of qualifications. 	<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. • Harmonise/ coordinate the activities of employers' organisations for better advocacy- with the lead of Business Africa <p><u>Examples of good practice in the North African region:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventions between centres and companies with a focus on the regions (Tunisia). 	
What the government could do regarding the informal sector			
<p><u>Informal Sector:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of the competence acquired (in the informal sector) for a job (in the formal sector). • Description to find a link between the educational level and the qualification level for a job. • Easing of administrative, fiscal and banking procedures to facilitate the transition to the formal sector. • Procedures adapted to each sector!!! 			
<p><u>To UMA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To act as a facilitator and coordinator of dialogue between different ministries and even between employer organisations. 			
<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 organisations. • 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. 			

You can find the full outcomes in the document attached.

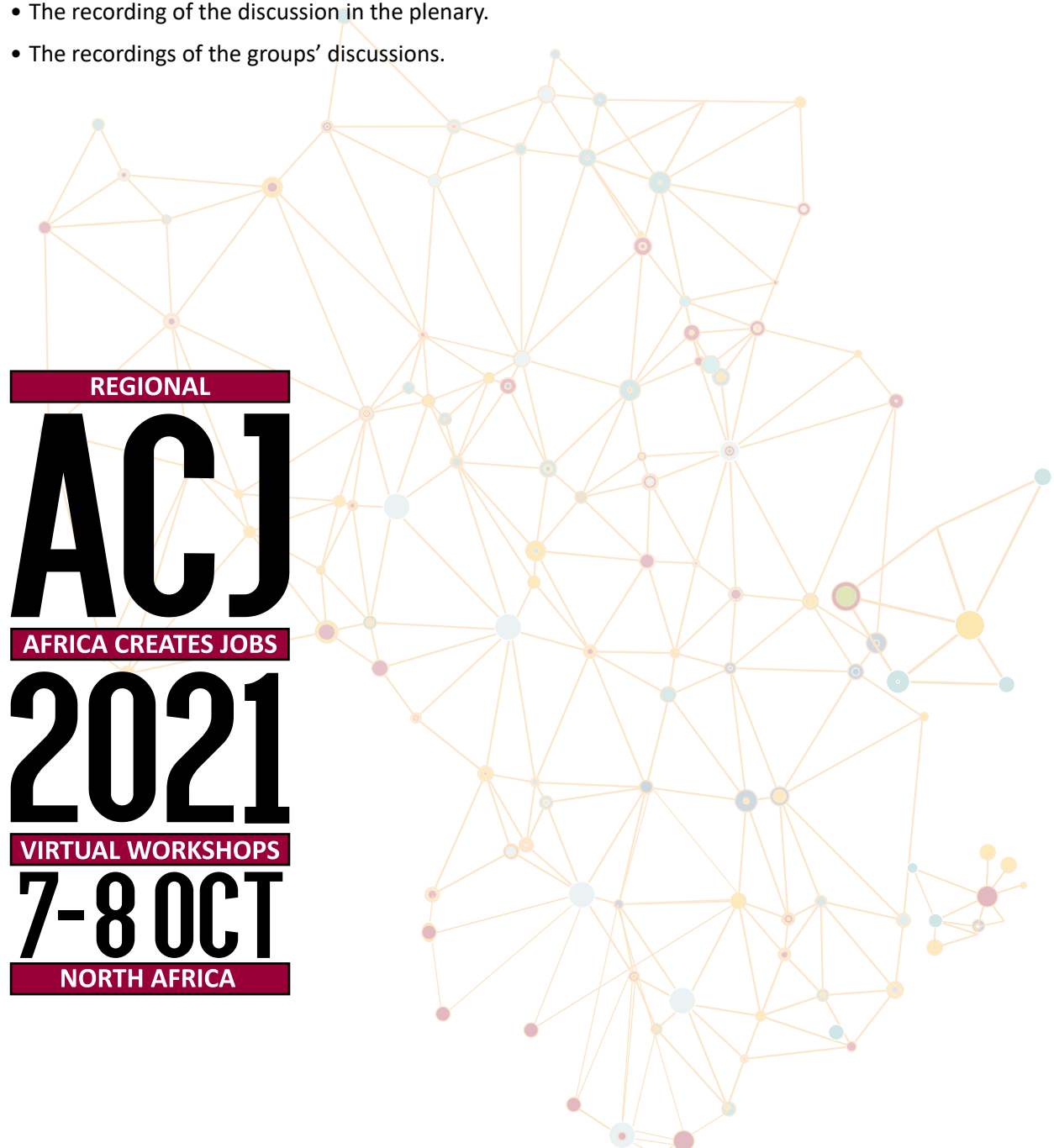
4. CONCLUSION

The Northern Africa Regional ACJ enjoyed a high-level of engagement from diverse and highly qualified 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 job creation and skills development in the region. The output of this 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 Northern 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).

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<https://www.nepad.org/skillsportalfor youth>

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