

THE JOBS FOR AFRICA FOUNDATION

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BLUEPRINT FOR JOBS IN AFRICA

THE AFRICAN JOBS AND SKILLS SUMMIT

Algiers, Algeria, 25 April 2017

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

[The Jobs for Africa Foundation](#) (JFA) is an initiative of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and Business Africa, which was launched on 3 November 2016 in Geneva. A product of the African Employers' Taskforce on Employment and Employability, the main objective is to sustain economic growth and accelerate the pace of job creation in the continent in order to absorb the millions of African youth that enter the labour market each year.

Youth unemployment is a major concern in Africa as the African growth story has not translated into more and better jobs. Lower commodity prices, insecurity linked to terrorism, the effects of the Ebola pandemic, State conflicts and climate change have contributed to lower economic growth and further exacerbated the job situation. Unemployment amongst women is as high as 44.8% while that of young men is 24.9%. Every year, about 3,000 young people die in the Mediterranean Sea as they try to seek opportunities in Europe. Many are also recruited by violent extremist group. Addressing the root causes of migration and extremism is a key priority.

It is for this reason that creating jobs has become of urgent significance for Africa. It is essential to support activities aimed at economic transformation, value addition, and the development of job rich sectors as well as activities aimed at skills building, lifelong learning and employability. Employment policies must be developed in a holistic manner based on a shared vision between workers, employers and governments.

The Jobs for Africa Foundation is supported by African workers under the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), ITUC-Africa and the Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATU). It has also received strong support from African Governments under the African Union Commission.

In addition to bringing together African employers, trade unions and governments, the Jobs for Africa Foundation seeks to mobilize and build partnerships with companies and international organizations in Africa who are active in job creation. Companies are aware that a skilled workforce and an enabling environment to create jobs drives key business goals, productivity

and profitability. The initial work of the Foundation was supported by Business Africa, Safaricom and the McKinsey Institute.

The Foundation initiative has also received strong support from the International Labour Organization (ILO). The first Casablanca Summit which led to the [Casablanca Declaration](#) was funded by the ILO Employment Policy Department. Other ILO departments that have taken an active role are the ILO Sectoral Activities Programme and the Bureau for Employers' Activities. The second Casablanca Summit, in 2015, led to the adoption of the [Blueprint for Jobs in Africa](#). This was supported by the ILO Regional Office for Africa and the ILO Country Office in Algiers. Recently the initiative has received support from the ILO Skills Department as promoting employability is key. The role of social dialogue in promoting a common vision between workers, employers and governments on jobs and competitiveness has also become increasingly important. It is for this reason that the ILO Governance and Tripartism Department has pledged its support, particularly in developing social pacts on employment and competitiveness at national level.

The launch of the Blueprint for Jobs in Africa was marked by a [high-level discussion](#) in 2016 on transforming African agriculture in order to create opportunities for the youth. The event was supported by the Office Chérifien des Phosphates (OCP Morocco), the Secretary-General of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Coca-Cola Company and the African Union Commission, with the attendance of several African ministers of labour as well as ambassadors. It concluded that the agricultural sector in Africa is the backbone of many economies and needs to be transformed from subsistence farming to agri-business. The use of more advanced technologies and ICT was identified as one way of attracting the youth in Africa into agriculture as a profession.

In order to sustain growth and accelerate the pace of job creation in Africa, the Foundation has sought the support of UNCTAD whose Secretary-General Dr Mukhisa Kituyi has been an active participant in pushing the need to expand productive capacity in Africa and increase intra-African trade which stands at less than 13%. The Foundation has also received strong support from the African Development Bank's Jobs for Youth initiative.

Implementation of the Blueprint for Jobs in Africa

The Foundation has received strong support from the European Commission. The social partners' summit which took place in Tunis in December 2016 was co-funded by the European Commission. It was officially opened by the Prime Minister of Tunisia, H.E. Mr Youssef Chahed, and by Nobel Prize Laureates Ms Wided Bouchamaoui of UTICA and Mr Houcine Abassi of UGTT who advocated for social dialogue as a way of addressing the jobs challenge in Africa. The event developed national action plans around four important themes:

1. A sectoral approach to job creation based on the importance of agriculture, energy and ICT;

2. The importance of social dialogue in developing national employment policies and social pacts on employment and competitiveness;
3. The importance of SME development, entrepreneurship, and the social and solidarity economy in building value chains and a strong private sector ecosystem;
4. The importance of skills development and employability.

Among the emerging priorities that the social partners summit in Tunis identified were:

- Mainstreaming employment into national action plans and priorities;
- Addressing the skills mismatch between training and the needs of enterprises;
- Promoting SME development, entrepreneurship, the social and solidarity economy particularly in rural areas, and formalization of the informal economy;
- Holding consultations at sub-regional level with ILO Decent Work teams in Cairo, Pretoria, Dakar and Yaoundé;
- Promoting job-rich sectors such as agriculture based on each country's competitive advantage;
- Promoting social dialogue as a tool to develop social pacts on employment;
- Building partnerships with other similar initiatives such the ILO Jobs Pact and the Global Employment Agenda (2003), the African Development Bank Jobs for Youth Initiative, the UN Sustainable Development Goal number 8, the African Union Ouagadougou +10 Declaration on Employment and Poverty Alleviation, the ILO Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises (EASE) toolkit, the 2015 ILO African Regional Meeting conclusions set out in the Addis Ababa Declaration, African Union 2063 Agenda, and the ACP Secretariat Private Sector Development Strategy.

African Governments have requested the African Union Commission to put the Jobs for Africa Foundation on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of the African Union Labour and Social Affairs Commission Meeting to be held in Algiers, Algeria in April 2017. The General Confederation of Algerian Enterprises, the General Union of Algerian Workers and the Ministry of Labour of Algeria have accepted to host a jobs and skills summit on 25 April 2017.

The event will be organized by the Jobs for Africa Foundation in collaboration with the IOE, Business Africa, ITUC, ITUC-Africa, OATUU, the ILO, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the ACP Secretariat, and the European Commission.

Expected outcome:

The objectives and recommendations set out in the Jobs for Africa Foundation's global Action Plan developed by the social partners in Tunis are shared with African Union labour and social affairs delegates who adopt a declaration in support of the priorities contained therein.