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MINISTRY OF STATE  
MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT,  
SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING



## **“Providing Africa’s Youth with Skills and Training for Jobs”**

### **The ICQN/TVSD 2014 Ministerial Conference**

**Abidjan, 21, 22 and 23 July 2014**

**Hotel NOVOTEL**

## **Summary Conclusions on the ICQN/TVSD Country Reports on “Providing Africa’s Youth with Skills and Training for Jobs”**

This paper is not a comprehensive summary of all the country reports. Its purpose is to give a clear and accurate overview of the ICQN/TVSD member countries’ policies and practices for tackling the extensive exclusion of young people from the world of work and helping them enter employment and productive activity as rapidly and efficiently as possible, so they can earn their living and take part in their countries’ economic and social development.

### **Part 1: the hard path to jobs for young people**

The reports above all show that there are many reasons for the exclusion of young people from employment or professional activity.

- For a third of young people, the so-called NEETs (“Not in Education, Employment or Training”), this exclusion is generally of an economic, social and professional nature.
- Young people account for a disproportionately high percentage (at least 60%) of the total number of unemployed, and there is a high rate of underemployment.
- In most countries, a high proportion of young people (up to 50% in some countries) have either not been to school or are under-educated and thus have a very low chance of doing anything other than a subsistence activity.
- For the vast majority of young people, this exclusion means an almost total lack of access to vocational training. TVET plays a minor and even insignificant role to the extent that some of the countries surveyed believe that only a tiny minority of young people (sometimes as few as 5% of any given cohort) have the training required to enter the world of work.
- Lastly, those who have achieved a decent level of education and/or training often have to wait several years before they find a job corresponding to their level of knowledge and skills. In some countries this period can be as long as three years. According to several studies on this subject, this delay can significantly limit the future career development of those who

struggle to find work quickly (OECD/AfDB, AEO 2012. Countries then have to provide remedial training, which is often very costly and ineffective.

So the exclusion of young Africans from the world of work is no longer the only issue at stake here. More specifically, young people are being doubly or triply penalised, which affects their basic rights and hampers their desire and ambition to become fully-fledged members of the societies in which they live. This highlights the absence of any social contract between public national authorities (governments, political parties, etc.), private stakeholders (civil society, associations, trade unions, NGOs, etc.) and the young people for whom they are responsible; it is vital for the African continent to forge a new deal for today's youth, otherwise a generation may be sacrificed, with all the potential problems that could entail.

Exclusion is also a form of social time bomb, with – as one development partner has remarked – one young person in two joining the ranks of insurgents declaring unemployment to be their main cause. It holds back economic development because the social and professional exclusion of young people, especially those who are among the most educated in the workforce, hampers the creation of wealth across the continent.

It is therefore urgent, for social and economic reasons, to pursue effective policies aimed at bringing young people rapidly into the world of work.

## **Part 2: the economic causes of this generational divide: a short-sighted perception of development processes**

The national reports highlight the underlying reasons for the disproportionate exclusion of young people from the world of work. It is first and foremost due to the fact that national economies are creating insufficient numbers of jobs. In many countries the number of young people entering the labour market is three or four times higher than the number of jobs available. Sometimes this ratio can even be as high as ten to one.

African economies are growing steadily but they must create more jobs than they are doing at present. This calls for a paradigm shift regarding the way the continent perceives its economic development, particularly the factors determining its growth, which has been faster in recent years. Available data shows that such development does not only or primarily depend upon the growth of large corporations. Such firms are often specialised in the extraction of natural resources and export their products while generating minimum added value and creating few local jobs. The data also shows that at least three out of four jobs are created by the self-employed and micro/small business entrepreneurs, who are the principal drivers of the local, national, and sub-regional economy. However, production and service units such as these, which are usually considered as actors in the informal economy, are real creators of wealth and jobs. In some countries they produce up to 70% of GDP, and in many they employ between 75% and 90% of young jobseekers (for example, 90% in Benin, 86% in Ghana, 80% in Kenya and 87% in Zimbabwe). They are too often ignored by national investment policies seeking to develop promising activities and industries.

African economies too frequently operate according to a development model in which growth depends almost exclusively on the ever-greater presence of global companies. But current trends, reflecting the “third industrial revolution”, underline the crucial role that other types of production unit (particularly in the informal economy) will play in the future as a source of innovation and new types of jobs and activities. This sector exists in all countries of the continent, but it is currently either ignored or neglected.

Africa must therefore rise to the challenge by placing investment programmes that create added value and stimulate the informal economy at the heart of socio-economic development strategies and policies. This will enable it to move away from subsistence activity towards innovation and entrepreneurship. Several country reports indicate awareness about this need and suggest that governments are making efforts to upgrade the skills of micro/small business entrepreneurs in both urban and agricultural/rural areas. These of course need to be coordinated with the tax and productive investment policies that only a few countries have started to develop.

### **Part 3: the institutional causes of this generational divide: an under-esteemed and poorly-funded skills development system**

The considerable difficulty young people have as far as employment is concerned is due to the existence of a two-speed economy which takes in the vast majority of young people entering the labour market while basically only offering them insecure employment. It is also due to the fact that, in most countries, ways of acquiring skills that lead directly to the world of work are held in very low esteem.

Just because the vast majority of young people enter informal employment, they are no less in need of training in order to perform properly the tasks entrusted to them.

Several studies show that if young people can acquire good technical and vocational skills they are better able to earn a living and develop an occupation. They can thus move more easily away from working to subsist and survive into activities that entail entrepreneurship and innovation. At present the vast majority of these young people are trained on the job and they acquire some of their professionalism with support from the rural and urban entrepreneurs who employ them.

Another reason why young people have considerable difficulty entering the world of work, which was strongly emphasised in the country reports, is the almost universal lack of public and private investment in youth training, despite the existence of national strategies aimed at developing vocational training.

Although some countries have invested in the development of greater access to technical and vocational training (Egypt, South Africa, Morocco and Tunisia, for example), most still have training systems that cater for only a very small minority (between 1% and 6%) of the young people in education. These systems lack the capacity to meet the demand from the huge numbers of young people outside education or without work. They are also unable to provide any alternative education and training for those who are failing at school or not in school at all. Furthermore, TVET content and facilities are often obsolete in the vast majority of countries, preparing for careers that are rarely if ever considered by national strategy papers to be in fast-growing employment fields.

This quantitative and qualitative mismatch between the current training system and jobs that really have good future growth potential in the medium term has several causes:

- **The first, most obvious cause is the disconnect between training establishments and the world of work.** There are too few links between these establishments and their economic and professional environment, and between trainers and employers. However, a close partnership between these two worlds is the only way to help match the skills produced by the training system with those required by the world of work, as the creation of “school/business units” inside these establishments is beginning to demonstrate.

- **The second cause, which is often underlined in the country reports, is the current lack of any real apprenticeship schemes or training courses combining training and work experience.** It has been increasingly clearly demonstrated that “mentored” skills development in the workplace is the best way to train for the wide range of jobs and professions open to young people who are self-employed or working in micro and small enterprises. Countries such as Ghana, Benin, Senegal, Morocco and Tanzania have fully understood how useful it is to introduce on-the-job training as a component of their training system.
- **A third and final cause is related to the poor state of information systems and knowledge management on the labour market.** All of the country reports in one way or another stress the fact that young people, and even their trainers have poor knowledge of currently existing occupations or those with strong growth potential. Many countries lack any sort system for monitoring and training that could help identify the types of jobs and skills that Africa needs in order to step up the process of sustainable development. Neither is there any research to forecast change processes, which would make it possible to plan future training and skills development provision.

#### **Part 4: the transition from TVET to TVSD: a prerequisite for effective training and job creation policies**

The country reports show that the transition from technical and vocational education and training (TVET) to a system that recognises the value of all forms of technical and vocational skills development (TVSD) is being made in national training systems. This process, which ADEA describes as a necessary paradigm shift to ensure young people have access to the world of work, signifies that skills development is something that takes place far more widely than just in public and private training establishments.

##### **TVSD covers every aspect of skills development**

TVSD occurs both in a limited number of successful courses run by formal training establishments, as well as in non-formal training situations organised mostly by civil society, for example skills development schemes run by the micro and small enterprises that take on the vast majority of African youngsters.

The paradigm shift affects the very way the future of training systems is perceived. It is not enough just to increase formal training provision and set up more establishments, even if they are experimental and focus on promising new occupations. It is also necessary to significantly improve access to jobs for the hundreds of thousands of young people who have no qualification. Neither is it enough for national authorities just to provide existing or future establishments with resources to train the young people to whom they give good training places. The implementation of effective and interdependent youth training and job creation policies entails a range of means and actions far beyond those currently on offer, which lie within the fortress areas of responsibility of the ministries concerned. The stages of this process are outlined in a number of reports and can be described as follows.

##### **A partnership-based system of governance is a prerequisite for the development of TVSD**

Analysis of the main factors preventing young people from finding work shows that in most countries there is significant mismatch between the skills produced by the TVET system and those required by

the economy. According to the Mauritania report, only 5% of young people entering the world of work have the professional profile required for existing jobs. According to the Zimbabwe report, 91% of young jobseekers have failed to acquire any professional skill. According to the Burkina Faso report, only 0.1% of young people are trained in occupations considered by the country to be strategic. The reasons given for this situation is the disconnect between training systems – where they exist – and the economy. As stated Ghana in the report, education and training bear no relation to the knowledge and skills needs expressed by important sectors of the economy. These include both modern industries that create a limited number of jobs, but which are innovative, and the informal sector, which offers work enabling the vast majority to earn the means of their subsistence.

Any reform seeking to improve young people's access to employment and thus reduce the extreme mismatch between skills required and skills produced must begin by thoroughly changing its mode of governance and involve business and professional stakeholders at all stages of its design, implementation and evaluation. The country reports describe suggest different ways to do this.

### **It is essential to recognise the full variety of situations in which skills are acquired**

The data on the different ways in which young people enter employment or start an activity shows that, in almost all countries, young people leaving school without a qualification acquire skills once they have found an employer, an apprenticeship or created their own business. The world of work is in fact the largest provider of skills development in the African continent, and, more specifically, entrepreneurs in informal urban and rural economy are the main trainers of African youth.

This fact means it is necessary to review how all future reforms are planned. In view of the weakness of formal TVET, to which only a very small minority of young people have access in many countries, it is clear that no country can alone significantly strengthen its current training system in the short and medium term. Given that the unit cost of training is high, especially for residential training, it would be counter-productive to invest primarily in infrastructure that would use up almost all of the budgets available for training a small number of people, except perhaps when it comes to training highly-skilled professionals for high value-added occupations. The proposals outlined in several country reports suggest the opposite solution, which would be to invest in raising the skills levels of professionals, namely craftsmen, master craftsmen who train apprentices and those in charge of production and service units, who are the people really involved in helping young people into work.

Investment in training in the workplace has a leverage effect in that it offers a powerful means for increasing the skills levels of a very large number of young people. It is thus necessary to allocate human and financial resources differently by giving joint priority to efforts to support those concerned with skills development, without which young Africans will have little chance of learn a trade that will enable them to make a living and prosper both economically and socially.

### **The creation of an education/training continuum is urgent and long overdue**

At the ADEA Biennale Meeting in 2008, all African countries stressed the urgent need to find ways of preventing uneducated young people leaving the school system having failed or a without recognised level of qualification from being deprived of any opportunity to actively train for the world of work, and thus ending up on the street. It was decided that specific pre-vocational skills development schemes should be developed, but this never happened. The large number of young people identified as NEETs in the country reports shows that the problem of young people outside any form of education or work remains highly topical. A proper solution has not yet been found.

A cross-analysis of measures being developed in the countries suggests that, for the first time, action is being taken to forge this continuum. For example, hitherto inexistent pathways between education and training in the various countries include:

- directing those with basic education into “traditional” apprenticeships with a stronger skills and training dimension (Benin, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia and Tanzania);
- creating local training and learning schemes as close as possible to where young school leavers live, particularly in rural areas (Benin, Cameroon, Zimbabwe and Burundi);
- the gradual integration of traditional “apprenticeship” into vocational training systems by validating the prior experience of apprentices and upgrading the skills of master craftsmen (Senegal);
- the development of dual apprenticeship combining classroom learning and work experience to enable young people to train for careers developed by formal enterprises (Mauritius, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Egypt);
- the introduction of skills development into the various branches of the education and training system (South Africa).

The development of effective pathways between education and training systems, and from basic education into updated traditional apprenticeship helps to reduce the periods of exclusion which have such a negative human, social and economic impact on young people. It also offers a unique opportunity to ensure there are no obstacles along the path from education and training into work.

However, these pathways will not automatically be created on their own. It is important to have a full debate about the way they can be used to forge close links between the worlds of education and training. It is not just about managing flows to prevent young people ending up on the streets and joining the growing ranks of NEETs. The key goal must be to create a learning continuum to ensure that the transition from school to apprenticeship strengthens basic skills while topping them up with generic, specific, vocational and social skills. This will enable young people to enhance their educational capital and enter easily into the working world.

Although this point was not explicitly covered by the data collected in the country reports, it is still important to note that the development of the education/training continuum is closely dependent on people having received a quality education prior to starting a training course. Unfortunately, over the last ten years, the quality of basic education has been falling as school numbers have increased. This has even made it difficult to achieve the MDGs, which are nonetheless quantitative in nature. Thus changes in training can only be effective if the priorities of basic education policies are simultaneously called into question.

**Young people who are excluded from any structured sort of activity must never be forgotten**

The education/training continuum will never bring an end to the existence of a group of young people who have never been to school or who have left the education system having failed and are therefore socially and economically marginalised.

The country reports highlight the need for specific measures for this group of highly vulnerable people. It is important to consider the skills needs of the large numbers of young people in rural

areas who are the least educated and for whom there is virtually no formal training, despite the fact that the vast majority of young people work in these areas and there are few traditional apprenticeship schemes. Such measures usually involve supporting communities to help develop a mixture of training and job creation schemes (as for example happens with the PFS service platform in Côte d'Ivoire). It is also necessary to help young people with no qualification acquire a minimum set of skills to enable them to perform a subsistence activity. For example, there exist short courses (lasting 1-3 weeks) organised at a very local level aimed at giving young people a stronger chance of doing immediately available work (as in Zimbabwe). Last of all, it is necessary to develop more formal schemes combining training, assistance to help set people themselves up in work, and the provision of technical and financial resources. This is the task of most public employment services and the rationale for a large number of schemes targeting particular groups who are excluded from the world of work (in almost all countries).

At this level there is no optimal model for schemes and support. The only rule seems to be the need for a mix of measures to ensure that skills development is tailored as closely as possible to the needs of the local economy and to support young people who have found work so that they have the utmost chance of pursuing their activity, for which there are no long-term guarantees.

## **Part 5: Towards TVSD focused on adaptation and anticipation as opposed to remedial training**

A broad and comprehensive analysis of the country reports shows that most countries are investing in the development of training and job schemes to bring an end to the extensive exclusion of young people from the world of work. While such schemes are necessary, given the fact that thousands and sometimes millions of young people are trying to find work, they are also expensive, inefficient and often only get young people into jobs that do not last. Some figures show that the unit costs for getting a youngster into work can be as much as € 15 000, which is equivalent to the cost of three years of education in most developed countries. Compared with estimates for the annual unit costs of apprenticeships in Africa, such expenditure is equivalent to taking on 10 apprentices for a training period of three years.

The conclusions to be drawn from these findings are clear: it is more than urgent ever for African countries to organise vocational training focused on adaptation and anticipation rather than remediation.

This transition process requires both immediate action and measures in the medium and long term.

### **In the short-term, it is necessary to stop organising a large number of dispersed and uncoordinated remedial measures**

Some country reports give the impression that there are all sorts of different youth employment policies. For example, in some reports, over a dozen measures exist alongside one another for similar target groups, identical themes or competing purposes. Most often, these measures are managed by teams who lack the time or means to meet, let alone coordinate with one another. The large number of measures prevents those responsible for them from analysing their impact properly. It is therefore reasonable to wonder whether the investment in these policies is worthwhile. The paradox is often that measures have been funded by donor agencies who implement projects without coordinating with other agencies working in the same field. The Paris Declaration is difficult to implement.

Given the budget data available, it is impossible to calculate the total cost of all remedial measures. However, in most countries this needs to be done. The total amount spent would probably be enough to enable them to anticipate needs by investing in a sufficiently effective and widely accessible skills development system.

It is more than ever necessary to review the organisational and budgetary logic of remediation policies. They often depend extensively on funding from development partners, and in the long term they prevent investment from focusing on preventive measures that might otherwise be able to prevent or at least alleviate the economic and social ills of youth exclusion, which governments struggle to tackle at an exorbitant cost.

### **The need to design, develop and evaluate schemes targeted at jobs in growth sectors together with all economic and professional partners**

Three points emerge from the country studies.

*The first point concerns existing schemes within the current system of vocational training.* There is a remarkable consensus that, with the exception of a small number of countries that are actively pursuing reform and some establishments that are considered to be pioneering training centres, the training currently on offer fails to young people the skills required in order to do the jobs available. Curricula are often out of date and the technologies too out-of-date. This prevents the beneficiaries from getting work easily. Considered in terms of cost-effectiveness, existing training courses are expensive and inefficient, because they are run on a basis that bears no relation to jobs that actually exist.

*The second point concerns the shortage or inadequacy of skills in relation to the requirements of the micro-enterprises that employ the vast majority of young people.* They need a wide range of skills which current training systems fail to provide. Nevertheless, there have been attempts to introduce reforms in this area, to enable young people to acquire skills to equip themselves for self-employment and work in micro and small enterprises. These mainly entail the development of apprenticeship and training for master craftsmen, the development of entrepreneurship, and the development of curricula for entrepreneurs, where possible designed and developed by those involved in economic activities, and the tailoring of certain schemes to local training needs. However, there is no guarantee that such schemes will be extended and they are not fully integrated into TVSD policies. They are often paid for and organised by the private sector or training funds that have been raised through taxes levied on the private sector.

*The third point concerns the notable lack of high-level qualifications for jobs in strategic sectors that are subject to international competition.* This point was already made at the ADEA Triennale. It has also emerged from research conducted in certain sub-regions such as the WAEMU. The current training system does not enable countries to react to the lack of skills in leading economic sectors, and the situation is exacerbated in countries in conflict or crisis. The upshot is that countries' resort to hiring qualified people from elsewhere and their national economies continue to be characterised by production activities with low added value. This lack of high and top-level level skills also holds back job creation in growth sectors and the development of the innovation capacity of micro and small enterprises in high-tech sectors.

The country reports stress the urgent need to bring an end to the mismatch between the labour market and skills development and to overhaul the education system by developing procedures for

ensuring that supply is in line with demand (creation of dual technological and vocational courses, local occupational training centres, sectoral centres of excellence for high-tech professions, reformed and modern traditional apprenticeship schemes, centres for the development of competence-based training, etc.)

### **The need to ensure that training establishments respond to the requirements of local markets**

The refocusing of the whole training system and in particular the transition from TVET to TVSD cannot be done without changing the way existing training establishments operate. The reports stress the need for decentralisation – not just on paper, but also in terms of funds transfers – and the “localisation” of vocational training. On the other hand, they say little about the implications of ensuring that training provision is more closely tailored to the local economic circumstances of a given area, or the effects this will have on the institutional model of local and regional training establishments. To focus training on adaptation and anticipation as opposed to remedial measures, such establishments must forge close relationships with local populations and take responsibility for the development of traditional and new apprenticeships, initial training for local trades, continuing training of entrepreneurs and schemes for helping those excluded from the labour market into work. This will require trainers to significantly change their profiles and practices.

There will be no transition from remedial training to training focused on adaptation and anticipation without a cultural revolution in training establishments. This means getting closer to the local environment and local stakeholders, promoting all ways and means of acquiring skills and, ultimately becoming places that are managed in partnership with and even by economic and professional stakeholders.

### **The need to invest in new skills for entrepreneurs and trainers**

The changes required in order to bring about a smooth transition from TVET to TVSD must be accompanied by a proper policy on the re-training of all the stakeholders involved in the various different ways and means of acquiring skills.

- First, to focus training on adaptation and anticipation as opposed to remedial measures, it is urgent to enable trainers in existing establishments to update the skills development programmes for the occupations they are responsible for. This means they themselves should make an effort to obtain work experience in formal or informal enterprises and get trained in competence-based training methods.
- Next, given many countries’ policies aimed at making apprenticeship a key feature of the future TVSD system, it is necessary to train entrepreneurs and master craftsmen and give them the training tools they need for training their young apprentices effectively.
- Finally, entrepreneurship training needs to be developed not just for businesses, but also for those responsible for TVSD, in order to foster a partnership-based system of governance combining quality and efficiency, needs analysis and training development. The country reports describe different models of governance that should be examined and compared.

The transition from remedial training to training focused on adaptation and anticipation requires a cultural revolution that will affect political decision-makers and economic stakeholders, professionals, and development partners. It can truly succeed if countries make an effort to share the most successful experiences in this field.

## **Part 6: stronger cooperation to pool countries' efforts: a pre-requisite for effective of training and job creation policies**

The ICQN/TVSD was launched to “foster cross-country sharing of experience concerning their vocational training systems and streams” and to “initiate effective cooperation between countries, at the sub-regional and continental levels, to enable the working population, particularly the young, to acquire the knowledge, skills and qualifications that they need as efficiently as possible.” Since it was launched four years ago, the ICQN has organised two ministerial conferences and two working seminars on national qualifications frameworks and youth employment. It took a step forward in 2014 by increasing the number of countries invited and by producing an extensive inter-country study on youth training and employment policies and practices in Africa.

The conference of 21, 22 and 23 July should identify current initiatives aimed at improving young people’s access to employment and establish a programme for cooperation and sharing of policies and practices in this area for the 2014-2017 period. This event should also provide an opportunity to endow the ICQN with stronger institutional foundations to ensure it becomes the point of reference for the development of technical and vocational skills across the African continent.

### **The need to learn from both current failures and promising innovations**

The first Ministerial Conference in July 2010 agreed to “to build on the successes and failures of all so as to optimise the investment in the design and implementation of the reforms under way in virtually all the countries”. The country reports constitute the implementation of this founding decision. Some of them have proposed an inter-country learning process by:

- working on how best to train trainers and professionals to successfully help young people into employment;
- working together on how best to design and develop common qualifications frameworks, in particular to validate acquired professional experience in the informal sector;
- sharing experiences on partnership-based governance of training policies and establishments;
- exchanging experience of education and training in agricultural areas;
- analysing together common reasons for the failure or success of youth employment schemes;
- consulting one another about how best to take into account the specific circumstances of different individuals in youth training and employment schemes and avoiding large-scale, catch-all programmes that are unsuitable and fail to differentiate between target groups;
- identifying budgetary practices that support expensive and ineffective TVET schemes which have no real impact on efforts to get young people into work;
- identifying best practices that help generate additional resources along with a better service through public/private partnerships;
- sharing information about arrangements for evaluating employment schemes and the criteria used to evaluate their effectiveness.

### **The need to step up coordinated efforts to end the crisis**

All countries note the need to find new ways to solve the economic and social problem of the mass exclusion of young people from the world of work. This has resulted in awareness of the importance

of efforts to rapidly meet challenges that are shared by all or at least sub-groups of countries. Several proposals are made identifying ways to boost cooperation in this field:

- strengthen the African pact for collaborating and pooling efforts to tackle unemployment initiated by the AU Declaration 2004 on Employment and Poverty Alleviation;
- create the necessary synergies to solve the problem of matching training with market needs in order to enhance the employability of young people and increase their chances of getting a decent job;
- improve young people's access to employment through ongoing sharing of information between national employment and vocational training monitoring systems, in order to better identify opportunities and obstacles;
- meet together the numerous challenges countries face, which are compounded by the long-term risks posed by climate change, armed conflict and the heavy social inequalities generated by youth unemployment;
- forge synergies between countries to establish sustainable and effective responses to youth exclusion;
- widen the scope of cooperation through the effective involvement of young people in meetings in order to take their views into account when designing and developing the employment and training policies that concern them.

#### **The need to design and implement inter-country schemes facilitating young people's access to employment**

The scope of national pilot schemes is often too limited to develop model solutions to problems that are generally transnational. For matters that are shared at sub-regional or regional level, it will therefore be necessary to pool efforts to propose and above all roll out common or similar measures:

- agree on instruments and incentives to encourage the private sector and socio-professional organisations to take on young people;
- identify and implement collaborative strategies and schemes that have a real impact on young people's access to the world of work;
- jointly develop an environment conducive to self-employment, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial culture;
- develop, within the ICQN/TVSD, a framework for the systemic analysis of vocational and technical training development which covers a broader range of skills;
- foster, within the ICQN/TVSD, the institutional and financial conditions for the production of studies and research on the development of TVSD, and create a bank of knowledge in this area;
- sign inter-country agreements to enable young jobseekers to enrol on courses in recognised, high-quality establishments outside their country of origin .

#### **In conclusion**

In this discussion paper, it has been difficult to take full stock of the wealth of data, analysis and proposals contained in the country reports. However, that was not its purpose. What it has sought to do is to illustrate clearly and strongly how countries are transforming their vocational training and skills development practices in order to tackle the extensive exclusion of young people from the world of work. It has also sought to identify potential areas of action that could significantly reduce this phenomenon, if not eliminate it altogether.

This summary is not a final document but the beginning of a process of reflection that the ministers and others involved in the ICQN/TVSD will take further, enrich and no doubt change in order to establish the theoretical and practical foundations of a common plan of action for the short and medium term. It has been essential to identify and analyse key points in order to understand how much still needs to be done. But this will only really be useful if it leads to a decision to embark together upon a process, and if necessary step up efforts to give young Africans the best possible opportunities to become fully-fledged participants in their continent's future rather than be left on the sidelines.