



International
Labour
Organization



African
Union



DECENT JOBS
FOR YOUTH

**BOOSTING DECENT
JOBS AND ENHANCING
SKILLS FOR YOUTH
IN AFRICA'S **DIGITAL
ECONOMY****

**A GUIDE TO THE
JOINT PROGRAMME
FOR **DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERS****



Decent jobs and skills for Africa's youth: meeting needs, seizing opportunities

Young people in Africa are full of ideas and potential. As the continent's most important source of human capital, they are **the key to achieving the African Union's Agenda 2063, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and countries' own long-term development goals.**

However, many young Africans face barriers to accessing decent work, a fact worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, the continent's digital transformation could be a catalyst to create new jobs in the digital economy and build back better. Africa's youth deserve the opportunity to benefit from new opportunities in the digital economy and fulfil their potential to steer it forward with their energy and creativity.

That's why the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) - in support of the African Union (AU) and under the umbrella of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth - are implementing **a programme to enable more young Africans to access decent work in the digital economy.**

Continental in scope, the programme has started in six partner countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and South Africa. It will be expanding to more countries through linkages with other ILO and ITU initiatives, and those of partners.

Becoming a partner: why join the programme?

We are seeking development partners who are ready to scale up action and impact for African youth. Join us to:

1. Make a high-impact investment in young people

Our interventions are designed for maximum impact. They take a multidisciplinary approach to **support young people as they find their place in the world of work**. That includes creating decent jobs and entrepreneurship opportunities, strengthening young people's digital skills and preparing employment services for the digital era

They are also **inclusive**, reaching young women, youth with disabilities, displaced youth, youth in rural communities and other vulnerable or marginalized groups of young people.

Youth empowerment being at the core of the programme, we work with and for young people. We partner directly with youth-led organizations to co-implement programme activities and scale up young people's innovations to boost decent jobs and skills for youth in the digital economy. Representatives of the Generation Connect Africa Youth Group are engaged across programme activities.

Spotlight on country actions:

- In **Nigeria**, we are working closely with the Nigerian SDGs Youth Network, a coalition of youth-led civil society organizations. We are supporting them to implement their Skills for Employment Programme, an initiative to equip youth with digital skills and place them in internships with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the digital space.
- In **South Africa**, we are launching a Digital Skills Innovation Challenge. This innovation challenge solicits innovative proposals to design and deliver a digital skills training programme catering to youth who are not in employment, education or training.

2. Move the needle on pressing development goals and priorities

The programme is **fully aligned with national, regional, continental and global development goals, plans and priorities**.

Joining the programme means contributing to progress under **Agenda 2063**, the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and other international commitments such as the **Call for Action on the Youth Employment Crisis**, adopted by the 2012 International Labour Conference, and the **World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC)** outcomes.

It also means **directly supporting progress on national development goals**. The programme is fully integrated with each country's own plans and priorities for youth employment, digital skills development and the digital economy.

3. Engage with a diverse group of partners and stakeholders

We work closely with a range of partners and stakeholders to implement the joint programme.

These include ministries of labour, ICT, digital economy, and youth; government agencies and regulatory authorities; social partners; youth-led organizations; civil society organizations; academic and research partners; the private sector; and development partners.

The joint programme is therefore a **unique platform through which you can tap into an inclusive and diverse network of national and regional stakeholders**, allowing you to engage across sectors, explore synergies with new partners, and work directly with young people to tackle some of Africa's most pressing challenges.

4. Access cutting-edge tools and evidence on youth employment in the digital economy

We are generating new knowledge about boosting youth employment in Africa's digital economy and developing young people's digital skills using improved diagnostic tools and assessments.

By joining the programme, you and your local partners will gain **access to the latest tools and evidence on tried-and-tested intervention models** for digital skills training, employment promotion, digital entrepreneurship support and other activities.

Spotlight on new evidence:

- **Digital skills supply and demand assessments**, such as in Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya, which will help inform digital skills development curricula
- **Entrepreneurship support ecosystem assessments**, such as in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, which show what actions are necessary to support young digital entrepreneurs

5. Leverage the unique comparative advantages of the ILO/ITU/AU partnership

This joint programme brings together the worlds of work and ICT in the African context, drawing on:

- **Combined technical expertise** on decent work, youth employment and building digital capacity for inclusive digital transformation in Africa
- The ability to **convene public and private stakeholders**
- A strong voice to **advocate for decent jobs and skills for youth in the digital economy**, shaping debates about the future of work and digital transformation nationally and throughout Africa.

Join our mission

Development partners are in a unique position to add their expertise, resources, networks and voice to our own and thereby scale up action and impact for Africa's youth.

We look forward to establishing long-term partnerships to support programme implementation at the continent and country levels. You can do this by:

- **Providing financial and/or technical support** for the implementation of innovative and tailored interventions in the selected countries.
- **Engaging public and private partners to establish partnerships and networks** to attract additional investments.

Are you ready to invest in decent jobs and digital skills for youth in Africa? Email us at jdey@ilo.org or itu-ro-africa@itu.int to find out more about the programme, its affiliated country projects, and how you can join us.

