



ILO Future of Work High-Level Dialogue

Jobs4Youth

A Human-centered Agenda to Boost Investments and Productivity in Africa

29 August 2019, Yokohama, Japan





About the Event

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) 7 took place in Yokohama, Japan, from 28 to 30 August 2019. On this occasion, the ILO organized, with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the JICA Research Institute, a High-Level Side Event entitled **Future of Work Dialogue on Jobs4Youth – A Human-Centered Agenda to Boost Investment and Productivity in Africa** on August 29, 2019 from 15:30 to 17:00, with more than 100 participants.

Reflecting on the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, which centers on the human-centered approach, the panel discussion of the event revolved around investments, in particular infrastructure investments, in strategic sectors of economies to create decent jobs, develop skills, and enhance productivity for youth in Africa.

The event gathered the following high ranking officials both from national and international institutions: **H.E. Ms. Toshiko Abe**, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan; **H.E. Mr. Ebrahim Patel**, Minister of Trade and Industry of the Republic of South Africa; **H.E. Mr. Lamin Jobe**, Minister of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment of the Republic of The Gambia; **Mr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki**, Chief Executive Officer of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD); **Ms. Amira Elfadil Mohammed**, The Commissioner for Social Affairs of the African Union Commission (AUC); **Mr. Maman Sambo Sidikou**, Permanent Secretary of G5 Sahel; **Ms. Sainabou Jammeh**, Managing Director of Community Road Development and Maintenance (CODEM) and the Japan-funded ILO project beneficiary; **Ms. Izumi Ohno**, Director of the JICA Research Institute; **Mr. Guy Ryder**, Director-General of the ILO; and **Ms. Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon**, the ILO's Assistant Director General and Regional Director for Africa.

The event successfully provided a platform for the elaboration of effective policies among a wide range of stakeholders, and to highlight the results of the ILO's development cooperation projects funded by the Government of Japan.



Link with TICAD 7 Plenary Meetings

The ILO's side event also fully aligned with the Yokohama Declaration, TICAD 7's outcome document, and its main topic on Advancing Africa's Development through People, Technology and Innovation.



YOKOHAMA DECLARATION 2019

Advancing Africa's Development through People,
Technology and Innovation

- “We recognize the need to prepare for the impact of digitalization on employment ... , as well as enhance human and institutional capacities to take advantage of these changes, **noting the importance of the human-centered approach**”
- “... commit to **strengthening job training** as well as micro, small and medium sized enterprises on the continent, recognizing they are the primary vehicle for **job creation and entrepreneurship**, including for youth and women”
- “We further commit ... to support impact investments to widen business opportunities and **decent jobs including for youth and women** in line with the aspirations and goals of the AU Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030.”



Opening Remarks



Guy Ryder

Director General, ILO

The ILO Director-General Mr. Guy Ryder opened the High-Level dialogue by acknowledging the pertinence of the event's topic to the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, which was adopted at the International Labour Conference this year. He articulated its "human-centered approach" to create decent jobs for youth in Africa and proposed investments in people, the institutions of work, as well as sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

"Investment in infrastructure" he emphasized, "especially in the agricultural, environmental, social and transport sectors, creates jobs and fosters a business-enabling environment" as stipulated in the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment adopted at the G20 Osaka Summit under the leadership of Japan.

Citing various examples of the ILO's development cooperation efforts in the implementation of its Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) in The Gambia and Mauritania with the support of the Government of Japan, as well as the ILO's work in South Africa since the 1990s and in particular through the country's Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) since 2003, he underlined the ILO's readiness to strengthen such partnerships to meet the growing demand on the continent. He concluded his remarks by drawing attention to the upcoming Regional Seminar of Labour-Based Practitioners (Tunis, 9 - 13 September 2019) to underscore the importance of African countries' growing interests in institutionalizing South-South Cooperation processes in the region. He welcomed further partnerships with active development cooperation providers such as the Government of Japan for effective technology transfer through triangular cooperation.



Remarks by the Japanese Government



Toshiko Abe

State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Japan

Subsequently, Ms. Toshiko Abe, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, congratulated the ILO on the organisation's Centenary year and recognized the ILO's activities beyond the traditional forms of work towards the achievement of the decent work agenda, with a reference to the report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work. She also acknowledged that job creation for youth is one of the key factors for development and sustainable growth. She concluded her remarks by wishing success to the projects in Africa financially supported by the Government of Japan, highlighting the technology transfer from CORE, the Japanese NGO in ILO projects in The Gambia and Mauritania, and welcomed the active involvement of Japanese staff from the ILO.

Comments by the MC



Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon

Assistant Director General and Regional Director for Africa, ILO

The ILO Regional Director for Africa, Ms. Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon, serving as the Master of Ceremony (MC), highlighted the long partnership between the ILO and the Government of Japan. She emphasized Japan's substantive contributions to the ILO not only through the regular budget but also on a programme/project basis from the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, as well as from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She acknowledged with great appreciation that between 2015 and 2018, Japan



contributed a total of US\$163.2million, which made Japan the second largest contributor to the ILO's regular budget, and voluntary contributions to support ILO development cooperation efforts all over the world, which amounted to US\$17.1million. Specifically for Africa, Japan had recently contributed US\$2 million in total to The Gambia and Mauritania.

Keynote speech



Ebrahim Patel

Minister of Trade and
Industry,
The Republic of South Africa

**“Young trees make
up a forest”**

“6 I’s & 2 E’s”

As the old African proverb says, “young trees make up a forest,” H.E. Mr. Ebrahim Patel,



Minister of Trade and Industry of the Republic of South Africa, stressed the importance of improving youth employment prospects in the context of the enormous ongoing demographic shift on the continent. In order to depict the comprehensive strategies to tackle the issues that are pertinent to youth unemployment, he introduced the concept of “The 6 I’s and 2 E’s” as key drivers in achieving the objective.

- Importance of 6 I’s

The 6 I’s, are: 1) Industrialization, 2) Investment, 3) Infrastructure development, 4) Innovation, 5) Integration, and 6) Inclusion.

As a successful example of “**industrialization**,” he referred to the development of the automobile industry in South Africa which had produced and continues to produce a significant amount of job opportunities. He suggested that this policy model can be replicated in other sectors.

He stressed that “**investment**” is a prerequisite for the aforementioned industrialization. Although Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) in Africa have seen an increase recently, he pointed out that the absolute amount is still lower than the other regions.

“**Infrastructure development**” is crucial for both short and long-term development, he acknowledged. He also recognized that there is a US\$100 billion funding gap in infrastructure investment.

In face of the 4th Industrial Revolution, “**innovation**” can also create new forms of employment, especially knowledge-driven ones.

Regional “**integration**” also enhances the economic inter-linkages within the continent. He raised the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which will come into effect in 2020, as an example of the economic impact that regional integration brings about.

He equally pointed out the risks and consequences of the exclusion of women and people in rural areas. As an example of “**inclusion**” the government has achieved, he mentioned the Expanded Public Works Program (EPWP) in South Africa, in which a significant number of young people have obtained their skills and job opportunities in different sectors.

- Importance of 2 E’s

The 2 E’s consist of: 1) Education and 2) Entrepreneurship.

He reiterated that “**education**” and vocational training are key to enhancing the employability of African youth. He touched upon the recent launch of the Youth Employment Service, a partnership between the government and social partners, as a



way of incentivizing stakeholders to engage youth in various forms of training.

Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), Africa's largest development finance institution, was brought up as an example regarding “**entrepreneurship**.” The institution provided incubating businesses with necessary support to develop the capabilities of youth entrepreneurs in the areas such as food production and innovative manufacturing.

Interactive Panel Session

<Moderator>

Ms. Izumi Ohno

<Panelists>

Mr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki

Ms. Amira Elfadil Mohammed

Mr. Maman Sambo Sidikou

Mr. Lamin Jobe

Ms. Sainabou Jammeh



Izumi Ohno

(Moderator)

Director,
JICA Research Institute



Ms. Izumi Ohno, Director of the JICA Research Institute, served as the moderator of the session. She summarized the challenges and opportunities in Africa and stressed the decent job-creating potential of infrastructure. She then invited the panelists from diverse backgrounds to share good practices and insights for promoting Jobs for Youth across Africa.



Ibrahim Assane Mayaki

Chief Executive Officer, NEPAD

“We need an ecosystem that helps with job creation.”

Mr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of NEPAD, stressed the needs to create an “ecosystem” for job creation. This ecosystem, according to him, functions based on the existence of (1) hard issues such as infrastructure, energy, road etc., (2) soft issues such as laws, rules and regulations, and (3) education systems for technical and vocational training.

As a concrete example, he introduced two initiatives initiated by NEPAD: the PIDA (Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa) Job Creation Toolkit; and Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA).

Noting that regional solutions are necessary to tackle regional problems, he pointed out the high potential of the regional economic corridors in Africa for job creation prospects and argued that national policies should also consider the regional dimension.



Amira Elfadil Mohammed

The Commissioner for Social Affairs,
African Union Commission (AUC)

“We are always looking to women & youth in Africa”

Ms. Amira Elfadil Mohammed, the Commissioner for Social Affairs, African Union Commission (AUC), pointed out that AU’s policies on labour and employment issues, driven from the AU Agenda 2063, fully align with the ILO’s standards.

She pointed out that the main challenge Africa faced today was job creation. Citing PIDA as an example in infrastructure and agriculture development, which she insisted, helped in creating more jobs. She especially emphasized the great potential of the agricultural sector, with the recognition that women and youth should always be taken on board.

She referred to the effectiveness of microfinance for SMEs as a way of supporting entrepreneurs, as well as the need for training and guidance that they require.

She argued that Africa’s unique cultural heritage could also help promote industries such as tourism and fashion, and help create more jobs.



Maman Sambo Sidikou

Permanent Secretary, G5 Sahel

“Education should be the core of everything”



Mr. Maman Sambo Sidikou, Permanent Secretary of G5 Sahel, discussed the challenges and solutions for youth employment prospects in the fragile context where he operates. He emphasized that rural areas face severe problems such as extreme poverty due to the lack of infrastructure such as access to roads, as well as security issues that “trap” the region, where the impact of climate change and subsequent scarce resources are leading to conflicts.

He stressed that education and vocational training is crucial for the region to escape from poverty. He also called for coordinated actions among all the relevant stakeholders to tackle the issues at hand.



Lamin Jobe

**Minister of Trade, Industry,
Regional Integration and
Employment,
The Republic of The Gambia**

**“We try to help
the informal sector by lifting their skills”**

H.E. Mr. Lamin Jobe, Minister of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment of The Gambia, emphasized that the ILO project funded by the Japanese government generated employment opportunities and increased accessibility to roads for the fisheries and tourism sectors. In this project, he explained, 250 youths were recruited and received a series of on-the-job trainings in the road sector. The recruited youths in this project were 50% women, 30 returnees of irregular migration, and 10 people with hearing disabilities, which demonstrates the virtue of the provision of equal opportunity.

He also mentioned skills development as the key to transforming the informal sector. He also introduced a concrete example of mechanizing agricultural activities, a major economic driver in the country, as a way to boost the productivity of farmers, while noting the importance of strategizing industrialization efforts. He underscored the necessity of looking at the value chain by training farmers to produce, industrially processing what farmers produce, and then bringing the finished products onto the market.



Sainabou Jammeh

Managing Director,
CODEM (Community Road
Development and Maintenance)

“If we want illegal (irregular) migration to stop, we need jobs”

Ms. Sainabou Jammeh, Managing Director of CODEM and the beneficiary of the ILO project funded by the Government of Japan, shared her experience in the ILO project and how the training package offered by the Japanese NGO and the introduction of Do-nou technology helped her launch her own business.

She referred to the recent phenomenon of young Gambians migrating through irregular routes to the north due to the lack of employment opportunities, and insisted that young people need jobs to stay in their country. Through the ILO’s skills training scheme, she was paid for her labour on a weekly basis, which enabled her to also support her entire family. On a personal level, she referred to the fact that she was raised by a single mother and faced many stereotypes against her employment in the construction sector. However, she demonstrated pride in her job that the feeder roads are beneficial for people and for the country, and the fact that she is now a job creator instead of a job seeker.

She concluded her intervention by reiterating that youth are the future leaders, and EIIP is a human-centred approach providing capacity development for young people.





Concluding Remarks



The ILO Director-General, Mr. Guy Ryder, summarized the rich discussions and stressed that the decent work agenda in Africa is urgent, since the consequences of inaction would lead to huge costs.

He emphasized that TICAD provides an extraordinarily important platform to connect policymakers from different institutions, and reiterated that the policy coordination opportunities generated through this event should be conducted on a regular basis. In conclusion, the Director-General underlined that the meeting must be the starting point for additional collaboration, building on the highly successful examples such as those from The Gambia, and scaling individual interventions up into regional and international initiatives.