

## **18<sup>th</sup> Regional Seminar for Labour-based Practitioners**

### **Theme: " Towards Sustainable and Inclusive Local Development: Local Resource-based Approach and Decent Job creation"**

**09 - 13 September 2019, Tunis, Tunisia**

#### **Ministerial Declaration**

1. We, the Ministers and country representatives from South Africa, Benin, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mali, Libya, Niger, Rwanda, Uganda and Tunisia responsible for Employment, Transport; Public Works, Development and International Cooperation; Local Affairs and Environment, Economy Planning and Investments;
2. Meeting at the Ministerial session from 09-10 September 2019 at the Palace Hotel in Gammarth Tunis, as part of the 18<sup>th</sup> Regional Seminar of Labour-based Practitioners chaired by His Excellency Zied Laadhari, the Minister of Development, Investment and International Cooperation of the Republic of Tunisia and his Excellency Mokhtar Hammami, Minister of Local Affairs and Environment of the Republic of Tunisia;
3. Noting that governments have ratified and initiated the implementation of activities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and recognizing the contribution of Employment Intensive (EI) investment approach in realizing many of the outcomes of the SDGs thereby espousing sustainable and inclusive development;
4. Recognizing that the application of EI investment approach is one of the key instruments in responding to the challenges of climate change and environmental degradation, the effects of which are detrimental to the development of communities and the preservation of local resources, accepting the need for acknowledging the importance and the adaptation of endogenous technologies and nature based solutions;
5. Noting that the decentralization processes being pursued in many countries are crucial for the creation of decent work opportunities for young people, women, men, people with disabilities as well as offering business opportunities to local entrepreneurs through increased participation in the construction and maintenance of public funded infrastructure works, with a special focus on the rural and peri-urban areas;
6. Recognizing that productive employment and decent work are key to achieving inclusive and sustainable socio-economic growth; Noting that the safety, security and fair working conditions are crucial for increased productivity and personal development of workers; further noting that despite the significant increase in the use of Employment Intensive investment approach in many countries in the region, there are still lingering concerns about the sustainability of jobs created;

7. Recognizing that the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, that was co-chaired by Africa, highlighted the future of work, especially the rapid technological innovations, proliferation of new information technologies and digital transformation that are irreversible and will impact on the number and type of jobs available and how to fulfil them.
8. Recognizing that lifelong learning as well as training on local resource-based approaches are the essential criteria for improving employability and productivity of workers in the changing world of work and reaffirming the need for the creation of centres of excellence for labour-based training anchored to the national education and research systems;
9. Noting that poverty is a threat to global prosperity and inspired from the ILO Recommendation No. 205 on Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience, which affirms that conflicts and natural disasters have severe consequences for the world of work, while poverty, unemployment and decent work deficits can in turn become factors of vulnerability and fragility ;
10. Noting that the achievement of participating countries in the implementation of the commitments made during the previous regional seminars, for the labour-based practitioners, have not been uniform and that countries have different governance structures for the EI works;
11. Noting the deficit in governance in the area of promotion and creation of employment, as well as the low level of uptake of the social and solidarity economy;

**We therefore commit to:**

12. Put in place a strategy to diversify Employment-Intensive Investment Programmes (EIIP) into non-infrastructure works and services, to maximize employment opportunities and create sustainable livelihoods for the poor leveraging innovations, new technologies and digital transformation, in spirit of leaving no one behind;
13. Strengthen the capacity of public bodies, local institutions and communities through skills training that is aligned to national education systems and reflect national/sectoral priorities and that meet the labour market needs, in order to increase the participation of young people, women and people living with disabilities in the labour market;
14. Promote coordination and coherence of public policy and programmes and improve collaboration between the different implementation and governance structures to improve the productivity, efficiency and inclusiveness of EI investment initiatives to bring significant changes in the lives of young people, men and women, SMEs and people living with disabilities;
15. Take concrete measures to improve public procurement policies and procedures, at both central and decentralized levels, to ensure full involvement of community-based organizations, encourage the use of local resource-based approach, facilitate access of local

businesses to EI investment works, while at the same time ensuring the quality, durability and cost effectiveness of infrastructure works;

16. Design and implement public employment programmes in line with long-term national/sectoral policies and investment priorities and promote transparency and good governance in order to create sustainable livelihoods for the youth, women and people living with disabilities, focusing on nationally-led and funded initiatives;
17. Improve the collection, compilation and dissemination of information and knowledge on global good practices on EI approaches and innovative technologies to promote south-south collaboration and international solidarity;
18. Sustain and strengthen the methodologies of employment impact studies, put in place appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems for EI investment projects and strengthen the participation of local communities in the monitoring of projects, through social audits;
19. Establish proactive monitoring / evaluation culture and set up a system for quantifying measures taken by participating countries to implement this ministerial declaration;

**Solicit that:**

20. Governments and other donors such as the African Development Bank, the European Union, the BMZ, the French Development Agency, Japan.. should be encouraged to finance activities that contribute to the achievement of SDG, AU Agenda 2063, Ouagadougou +10 on employment and Paris climate agreement;
21. The ILO should take an active role in facilitating exchanges and sharing of experiences on global and regional good practices in the areas of inclusive public procurement, community ownership, nature-based solutions and other cross-cutting social issues, in order to promote South-South engagement. The ILO should further help in the development of implementation tools to benefit countries that are interested to take up innovative EI investment and climate resilient construction techniques;

**Appreciate:**

22. Countries whose efforts in the implementation of EI investment programmes and projects had a significant economic, social and environmental impact and have shared good practices in the use of local resource-based approaches; For example, Ethiopia which devotes 30% of its road maintenance budget for the implementation using EI investment approach, Tanzania, Tunisia , South Africa and Zambia where 20% of public contracts are reserved for youth, women and / local entrepreneurs (SMEs) ;

23. Efforts made by South Africa in mainstreaming locally funded EI investment programmes at all levels (national, provincial and local) and the integration of EI investment techniques in the major sectors of economy;
24. The efforts of Rwanda and South Africa for the institutionalization of EI investment approaches through the creation of a national public agencies whose responsibilities include, among others, are to ensure the realignment of a part of national budget towards the local development activities executed using EI investment approach in order to optimize socio-economic impacts ;
25. Cameroon for the integration of community organizations and local craftsmen into public procurement through the adoption of a new public procurement code ;
26. The ILO for the multidimensional support provided to countries for the promotion and support of EI investment approach and for the follow-up of the commitments arising from this edition of the Regional Seminar of Labour-based Practitioners;
27. The Government of the Republic of Tunisia and the Organizing Committee for the successful organization of the 18<sup>th</sup> Regional Seminar for Labour-based Practitioners and urge all participants of the Seminar to bring the contents of this Ministerial Declaration and the Declaration of the Participants to their respective Governments and work towards its implementation;

**Vote of thanks to:**

The members of the Government of the Republic of Tunisia who honoured the gathering by their presence in the opening ceremony; the Minister of Development, Investment and International Cooperation of the Republic Tunisia and the Minister of Local Affairs and Environment of the Republic of Tunisia and the Tunisian people for the warm welcome and successful execution of this 18<sup>th</sup> Regional seminar for the Labour-based Practitioners.

**Tunis, Tunisia, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019.**