

## Meeting notes

Workshop with labour-based training institutions (18 August 2021)

### ***Revisiting the collaborative platform in face of emerging challenges and opportunities in the context of SDGs and the COVID-19 pandemic***

#### **1. Introduction**

**Mr. Chris Donnges, Head of Job Creation through Public Investment (EIIP) Unit, ILO HQ,** introduced the ILO's Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP)'s technical cooperation portfolio, its objectives to create employment through public investments, and its intervention modalities categorized into [6 packages](#). He underscored the importance of the capacity building of both the public and private sectors to achieve the said objectives, where collaboration with local stakeholders, particularly the labour-based training institutions, plays a key role. He concluded his opening remarks by underscoring the importance of collaboration with training institutions to create jobs and deliver quality assets and services through capacity building.

#### **2. Introduction on the origin and purpose of the [General Agreement for Cooperation \(GAC\)](#)**

**Mr. Asfaw Kidanu, EIIP Specialist, ILO Pretoria,** presented the economic prospects in Africa as well as the teething socio-economic challenges including growing inequality, unemployment, poor access to basic infrastructure and persistent poverty, which are being compounded by environmental degradation, climate change, and the COVID-19 pandemic among others. He outlined main instruments available to governments, in which skills anticipation, development, and matching are necessary elements of an enabling policy and institutional framework that drives change. He underscored the importance of collaboration among stakeholders particularly through innovative and South-South partnerships to develop skills at different levels of learning processes. He also shared a building blocks and key interventions needed in order to create strong national training capacity.

#### **3. Status of GAC**

**Mr. Chamle Mahmoud, Principal, Appropriate Technology Training Institute (ATTI), Tanzania,** gave an overview of the history of the collaboration among labour-based training institutes that started in Uganda in 2009 with only three training institutes in the East African region. The membership of the forum was later expanded to include about thirteen institutions at the ILO supported meeting held in November 2015 in Addis Ababa. During the meeting the participating institutions adopted a General Agreement of Cooperation (GAC) that was valid for four years to the end of 2019. Mr Chamle also outlined the achievements and challenges encountered in the implementation of the GAC as follows:



### Achievements

- Accelerated national training: in Tanzania, a new institution of construction technologies was formed, transforming training curricula into an accredited national training system under the Ministry of Works.
- International/regional collaboration was facilitated in the areas of research for accreditation mechanisms, appropriate technologies, and training.
- Knowledge-sharing meetings were organized with support of the ILO.

### Challenges

- Ineffective coordination mechanism mainly due the dysfunction of coordination committee and its leaders.
- Unclear networking mechanism between collaborative parties, making the platform dependent on individual communications among interested institutions.
- Unclear mechanism for the systematic sharing of intellectual properties which is dependent on national frameworks.
- Unclear mechanism to secure funding to achieve key objectives of the GAC.
- Turnover of steering committee members (5 members from different countries) created a gap to carry out the work.
- No communication was made before the expiration of the GAC.

## **4. Results of ILO survey**

**Tomoki Watanabe, JPO in Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP), ILO HQ,** gave an overview of the results of the survey among the labour-based training institutes as well as introducing ILO's basic principles and approaches relating to employment and employability, environmental preservation and just transition to a sustainable economy as well as south-south collaboration. He presented the following results to set the scene for discussion: 1) Only a small portion of labour-based training institutes engage in the capacity building of "green works", and with the limited participation of social partners. 2) Distant learning and the use of digital technologies are limited due often to the limited IT infrastructure and the perception of the quality of the training. 3) Institutional strategies require analyses of skills gap, market demands, training contents and M&E frameworks, but some institutions have a fragmented approach to it. 4) There is a strong interest among the labour-based training institutions to revive the cooperative platform but a clear mechanism is necessary.

## **5. Relevance of training contents and targets**

- 1) **Mr. Ali Benjaoui from Centre Sectoriel de Formation en Bâtiment de Ben Arous in Tunisia** elaborated on the benefits of green works in mining and other industries. He emphasised the key role human resources management plays in the optimization of labour force to guarantee the product quality, and for that purpose, the capacity of national vocational training systems is essential. He also stressed the importance of the combination of construction works and the maintenance of constructed assets.



- 2) **Mr. Adamah Messan, Associate Professor at the Institut International d'ingénierie de l'eau et de l'environnement in Burkina Faso** highlighted the necessity to integrate the production of local construction materials into the training programmes in such a way that the training institutions can develop a greener economy in different economic sectors in different countries. He noted that, especially in West Africa., waste management has been a challenge, but from a different perspective, there may be an opportunity use available materials from these wastes to produce construction materials with a view to addressing climate change.
- 3) Following the presentations, participants raised the following comments:
- **Green Works:** The term “Green works” is unknown to many. ILO’s EIIP defines the green works (travaux verts) to refer to “*the employment-intensive works, restoration and maintenance of public infrastructure, community assets, natural areas and landscapes that contribute to environmental goals such as adaptation to climate change and natural disasters, environmental rehabilitation and nature conservation*”. By definition, green works are labour-intensive. Climate-proofing in the conventional road works, building works and other construction works can also be considered green works.
  - **Target groups:** SMEs are key stakeholders in the training process from a practical point of view, as the labour-intensive activities work through them. There is a need to stay in touch with sectoral associations through the training process to share their experiences.
  - **Target groups:** Involvement of the managers and directors of SMEs is critical for choosing training modules from the conceptualization process of training modules.
  - **Sustainability:** Sustainability of the training should be the core of the discussion. From that perspective, it is necessary for the labour-based training programmes and curricula to be integrated into different training modalities across different sectors.
  - **Local materials:** Local material production should be taken into consideration when programming training to reduce the negative impact on climate. Government institutions are generally willing to support green technologies. Impact study and mitigation measures as part of environmental safeguards are available in some institutions. There is a need for machinery to extract local materials.

## **6. Digital technologies**

- 1) **Ms. Nema Kadaluka, Director, National Construction Industry Council of Malawi**, explained her institution’s objective to regulate, develop, and promote construction industry in Malawi. She mentioned that the training had been based on class-based training until the COVID-19 crisis hit the country, when the institution, as was the case for most of the institutions, was alerted with the increasing need to use digital technologies through e-learning. In the past, it was completely face-to-face learnings. The situation applies to most of institutions in Malawi. However, she noted that people were not trained on how to use and participate in the digital platform during a certain period, which created a challenge for many. She underscored the benefits of going digital in terms of accessibility and cost-efficiency. When the IT and internet infrastructure is fable, videos can be recorded, and shared with stakeholders through a website, she mentioned.

- 2) **Mr. Ouro-Djobo Samah, Director General, Centre Regional de Formation Pour Entretien Routier (CERFER) of Togo** highlighted the benefits of linking the training with social media. In Togo, authorities made a measure to close down all the schools and higher education buildings due to the COVID-19 preventive measures. Exchanges over WhatsApp, Telegram, or other chat box functions helped meet the trainees' need.
- 3) Following the presentations, participants raised the following comments:
  - Online training can reach as many people as possible. For technical subjects and delivery of professions, it is necessary to be able to see if a person is able to handle such digital tools. Combination of online and face-to-face is necessary because some professions require physical training. It is necessary to show in person and teach the students. Technical training should go hand in hand with face-to-face and online training.
  - Short videos are useful. For an easy access, these videos should not be too heavy to be downloaded. Technicians can show technical activities (practical activities). It can be uploaded on a platform. Sequencing of training. Sometimes difficult to ask questions for students. PowerPoints are created. Concentrated and not time-consuming. COVID-19 led to opportunities.
  - In remote areas, distant learning helped particularly youth access training opportunities. Digital skills should not be limited to the pandemic context, but it is good to exchange knowledge and experiences with different countries.
  - It is necessary to examine the required ratio between the theoretical training and practical activities to apply the theory.
  - If we are to integrate ICT, state-level support is necessary, including tackling the internet connectivity issues.
  - The pace of distant learning tends to be speedy. In case the trainees do not have schooling experiences, it is difficult to tailor the training programmes.
  - Most trainers are not familiar with organising and delivering training in a digital platform. Most also have limited access to ICT facilities. A concerted effort must, therefore, be made to address these issues so that training institutions are able to deliver quality training both face to face and via digital platforms

## **7. Collaboration among and between institutions**

Participants made the following interventions with regard to the collaboration among and between institutions.

- 1) Mainstreaming climate change adaptation and mitigation measures in to vocational training curriculum is an area we can tackle together. So as to minimize the impact of climate change on our people. These included provide training on climate smart techniques in the infrastructure, agriculture and environmental sectors and all the issues concerning green works.
- 2) We need to build on the existing (yet expired) GAC since the cooperation objectives are there and yet many activities in the GAC are lingering. We need to implement the agreement, and for that, there is a need to update the GAC with operational/actionable



items. For this to happen, a continuous and uninterrupted engagement is necessary among the participating institutions.

- 3) Regional Seminar for Labour-Based Practitioners to be held in Rwanda in 2022 is a good opportunity to formally launch a renewed partnership or strengthen its engagement.
- 4) This collaborative platform is and will remain regional initiatives by the labour-based training institutions but the support is needed from the ILO.

## **8. Following steps**

Participants agreed to pursue the following next steps:

- 1) We agree to continue this partnership.
- 2) An interim committee is required to re-launch the partnership.
- 3) An interim committee is for the duration of 3 months (until the end of October).
- 4) The interim committee consists of the following 6 personnel:
  - a) **Mr. Adamah Messan**, Institut International d'ingénierie de l'eau et de l'environnement, Burkina Faso
  - b) **Mr. Chamle Mahmoud**, ATTI Tanzania
  - c) **Ms. Diahara Drahamam**, Centre de formation professionnelle de Missabougou, Mali
  - d) **Ms. Nema Kadaluka**, National Construction Industry Council of Malawi
  - e) **Mr. Jamel Aloui**, Centre de formation professionnelle Agricole dans le secteur des forets REMEL, Tunisia
  - f) **Mr. Robert Mapemba**, Limpopo Training Center, South Africa
- 5) **Mr. Asfaw Kidanu**, ILO-Pretoria, is an advisor to the interim committee.
- 6) The interim committee will choose the chair among themselves.
- 7) An operational plan is to be drafted by the interim committee.
- 8) Revised GAC with an operational plan is to be shared among committed members for endorsement.
- 9) Permanent committee will be formed for the next 3-4 years to come.
- 10) The interim committee will organize the next meeting.
- 11) Meeting notes will be shared after the workshop.