

Collaborative partnerships and effective tools facilitate seamless workplace-based learning

The AUDA-NEPAD, through its Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) programme hosted the third and final webinar in this series aimed at unpacking useful practical tools for implementing apprenticeship programmes on the African continent. In the webinar hosted towards the end of November 2022, the use of well-designed logbooks and symbiotic partnerships in the implementation of Industrial Attachment Programmes (IAP) came into the spotlight. A case study presented by Rwanda Polytechnic demonstrated that positive collaboration among Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, government and the private sector within a well-defined Industrial Attachment Programme (IAP) framework can bring about positive outcomes.

Rose Mukantabana, Head of Industrial Liaison and Job Placement at Rwanda Polytechnic unpacked how the TVET institution has designed an IAP logbook to be a tool that meets the needs of all role players in the ecosystem of workplace learning. This includes the student, the college, employers, industry and government. The logbook assists the student to keep a detailed record of tasks carried out and skills learnt over the course of attachment period. It is also a record of the practical skills and knowledge gained during the IAP.

It is also designed to enable both the college and workplace supervisors to track the students' progress, assess their work, and offer guidance where necessary. At the end of the IAP, both the academic and workplace supervisor submit a joint report on whether or not the outcomes of the IAP were achieved. Once the logbook is completed, it can be revisited to reflect on knowledge and skills acquired and reinforce experiential learning. The IAP report not only records student performance but allows industry to give valuable feedback, which the TVET college can use to review and revise its curriculum.

At Rwanda Polytechnic, Industrial Attachment is a module that is embedded in the curriculum which allows students to acquire practical skills which are tested and applied in a real-life work setting. The college carries out mandatory field visits to ensure that students in the industrial attachment placement are appropriately placed in a company that matches their field of study. The field visits are carried out by an Industry Liaison Specialist, a Head of Department and Rwanda Polytechnic head office staff. In the 2022 academic year Rwanda Polytechnic successfully placed 3,213 candidates who utilised the logbook across a variety of sectors such as hospitality and artisanal vocations.

The logbook is the last among several tools that AUDA-NEPAD, through SIFA has showcased through its webinar series on Apprenticeship Tools in Africa. The tools that have been shared through the webinar series all demonstrate what is being used today in different apprenticeship environments at different levels of development across the African continent. They can be utilised in environments where apprenticeships are well established, but also where apprenticeships are still being introduced and formalised. AUDA-NEPAD has made the tools available through the African Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship (ASPYEE) not as a blueprint for implementing apprenticeships but for inspiration to replicate good practices, where feasible. The logbook and similar tools can be found on <https://aspyee.org>