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African Continental TVET Strategy 2025-34

for

**Sustainable Development, Social
Justice**

and Employability for all

(Draft 15 August 2024)

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1 Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background and context

In 2015, the African Union (AU) formulated a continental strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), to foster youth employment. This strategy was designed to rejuvenate TVET across Africa, providing a robust framework for crafting and evolving national TVET policies and strategies to enhance youth employment, bolster economic growth, and alleviate poverty. Recognising the dynamic nature of the economic and social environment, the AUC initiated a process to revise the Continental TVET Strategy. This revision is imperative to evaluate progress and pinpoint effective strategies for refining TVET policies and systems. The goal is to ensure they align with the evolving trends and priorities in continental and global skills development.

The African Union Commission (AUC) evaluated the strategy in 2024 through a literature review, focus group discussions, and questionnaire responses from five categories of key stakeholders: ministries, TVET regulators, training providers, employers and workers organisations.

The evaluation noted that despite progress made in ensuring more people are getting better educated and access to training, there are persistent challenges facing TVET and skills development in general in the continent. The main challenges observed are:

- Skills mismatch is the primary challenge. Often times, the skills of youth graduating from TVET do not meet the labour market's demands.
- Weak governance and institutional capacity for TVET,
- Inadequate financing, and lack of quality assurance mechanisms in the TVET ecosystem.
- Lack of systematic involvement of employers and workers organisations at all levels of TVET, including for policy making.
- Lack of skills anticipation and forecasting to take account of emerging trends that influence the world of work, such as digitalisation, including AI, energy transition and climate change
- Uneven distribution of TVET centres, which are mainly located in urban centres.
- Low women's participation in TVET, specifically in areas involving STEM subjects,
- Inadequate supply of competent TVET trainers, experts, and managers,
- Weak integration of core work and entrepreneurial skills,

- Limited opportunities for TVET trainees to access quality on-the-job practical experience for enhanced employability.
- Lack of institutionalized information system which would provide timely, reliable information about skills supply and demand

The evaluation recommended that the next TVET strategy be closely aligned with the aspirations of the Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and other pivotal regional and global frameworks. Considering the four predominant trends—digitisation, climate change, demographic shifts, and migration—significantly impacting labour markets, it becomes imperative for TVET systems to adopt proactive measures. These trends must be at the heart of the new continental TVET strategy.

Furthermore, the Strategy evaluation emphasized the need for lifelong learning, non-formal and informal education, recognition of prior learning (RPL), skills portability, transnational cooperation, and knowledge exchange. Other critical areas that warrant more focused attention are enhancing the calibre of the teaching workforce and the image of TVET, the need for improved strategy visibility and AUC's collaboration with RECs, Member States and development partners to propel the TVET agenda forward.

In essence, the evaluation of the current Continental TVET strategy calls for the transformation of TVET in Africa for the continent to achieve its vision as enshrined in the 2063 Agenda successfully. Accordingly, this new TVET Strategy focuses on recommendations for transforming TVET systems in the Member States to contribute to achieving goals for sustainable development, social justice and employability for youth and older people, focusing on women and vulnerable people, including those in conflict contexts and emergencies.

1.2 Focus of the new strategy

While the previous strategy was primarily focused on enhancing youth employability, the revised one takes a holistic view of TVET in promoting the employability of all women and men, including vulnerable individuals, and supporting the vision of the Africa Union. This shift in focus is crucial in promoting lifelong learning for all people in the face of the rapidly changing skills needs of the labour markets, influenced by mega drivers such as technological advancements, climate shifts, demographic changes, and migration, as discussed in the subsequent sections, and in ensuring no one is left behind. The role of TVET in promoting social inclusion, particularly by addressing the needs of vulnerable groups such as those in the informal and rural economy, migrants, refugees, and people with disabilities, is also of utmost importance.

TVET plays a vital role, contributing to sustainable development and social justice, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, the AU Agenda 2063 and its objectives and goals, especially Aspirations 1 and 3 of the First Ten Year Implementation Plan (FTYIP). Therefore, the new strategy is well-aligned with the social and economic agenda of the AUC and acknowledges the need for blended work (remote and hybrid work), well-being, mental health, equity, inclusion, and lifelong learning. The new TVET strategy focuses on transforming TVET through close alignment with the broader development agenda of the African Union, value-based excellence, partnerships with the productive sector¹, innovation, co-creation and resource sharing between Member States.

1.3 Importance of skills in the development frameworks

Transforming TVET in Africa requires close alignment with the AU's key priorities highlighted in Continental and Global Strategic Development Frameworks. This section analyses the role of skills envisaged in the Agenda 2063, African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), AU's Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025 (CESA), Science and Technology Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA), the 2030 Agenda for SDG, and AU-ILO Youth Employment Strategy (YES)².

In the Agenda 2063, the African Union commits itself to speed up actions “to catalyse the skills revolution” as one of the critical actions needed to achieve its collective vision and roadmap. Its Aspiration 1, “*A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development*”, aims to foster well-educated and skilled citizens. Similarly, Aspiration 6, “*An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people*”, highlights “*full access to education, training and skills*” as a critical promise to be guaranteed for Africa's youth to realise their full potential. The Agenda 2063 Call to Action emphasises the need to strengthen TVET through scaled-up investments, establishing high-quality TVET centres, and fostering more significant links with industry and alignment to labour markets.

The AfCFTA, as one of the flagship projects of the Agenda 2063, aims to boost intra-continental “*trade in value-added*”, across all sectors of Africa's economy. The success of this ambition depends, among others, on the capabilities of Africa's workforce to engage in higher-value-added activities. In addition, the equitable distribution of the gains from trade and investment depends on the absorptive capacity of enterprises

¹ The term *productive sector* covers both public and private sectors. In Africa, the public sector plays a crucial role in job creation and employment promotion, so using the term *productive sector* is better compared to the private sector.

² Adopted by the STC on Social Development, Labour and Employment in July 2024.

operating in the member states. Therefore, the strengthening of TVET and the acquisition of relevant skills are important considerations.

As part of the Agenda 2063, the CESA contains specific provisions on TVET under Strategic Objective 8 on the expansion of TVET. The strategy aims to make human resource development a top priority and a recipient of substantial and sustainable investment, with TVET as an area that warrants special attention. As such, CESA explicitly references the Continental TVET Strategy and Science and Technology Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA) as integral parts of the larger Agenda 2063, to which these strategies aim to contribute.

The STISA acknowledges the pivotal role of technical competencies and the importance of TVET in opening career paths. It underscores the potential of Science, Technology and Innovation in supporting sustainable socio-economic growth and development of the Continent, with TVET playing a crucial role in realising this potential.

The AU-ILO Youth Employment Strategy for Africa (YES-Africa) addresses the current state of poor responsiveness of skills development systems to the labour market needs as a significant bottleneck hindering youth employment promotion. The strategy dedicates Priority Area 5 to “Skills development and youth economic empowerment”, recommending actions, such as skills intelligence, increasing budget allocation for education and training, productive sector involvement in skills development, and promotion of work-based learning including quality apprenticeships³, reskilling and upskilling initiatives, cross-border skills recognition.

The prominence given to the role of TVET in these continental strategic frameworks is in line with the global developmental framework, namely the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular the Targets 4.3 on equal access to affordable quality TVET including university; 4.4 on increasing the number of youth and adults with relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship; 4.5 on eliminating gender disparities in education and ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable groups; 8.3 on promoting development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation; and 8.6 on substantially reducing the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.

1.4 Mega transformations impacting jobs and skills in Africa

³ 187 Member States of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), including 54 African countries, adopted the Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation (R 208) in 2023 that provides guidance to the countries in implementing quality apprenticeships.

The rapidly changing world of work, driven by technological advancements, climate shifts, geopolitical tensions, demographic changes, and migration, underscores the urgent need for increased commitment and investment in human capabilities. Africa, with its large youthful population and high growth potential, is poised to reap the benefits. However, these benefits can only be realized with a timely and consistent investment in human resources development.

By investing in skills development and lifelong learning in Africa, we can unleash the potential of its people, particularly the youth. This investment will not only enable them to manage the continent's abundant resources effectively but also foster the innovative spirit that is already taking root, largely driven by Africa's youthful population. This, in turn, will stimulate investment and productivity, the cornerstones of sustainable economic growth and structural transformation.

On the supply side, the continent's growing and increasingly better-educated working-age population presents a significant growth potential at a scale that is not observed in any other parts of the world. Africa accounts for 85 per cent of the increase in the global working-age population. Many of them will likely contribute to the continent's growing talent pool, as the number of young Africans having completed upper secondary or tertiary education will more than double from 103 million to 240 million between 2020 and 2040 (AUC & OECD, 2024).

While Africa is poised to harness its demographic dividend, the quality of education received by its youth and the absorptive capacity of its labour markets remain significant challenges that must be addressed. Enhancing these aspects is crucial for the continent's future development.

On the demand side, the continent continues to struggle with so-called "jobless growth", with limited success in translating economic growth into decent job creation. The increase is primarily driven by relatively less labour-intensive sectors, such as extractives, rather than manufacturing. In many African countries, the share of manufacturing-related employment is below 5 per cent, limiting African economies' capacity to employ their people in formal and decent job opportunities. Meanwhile, people are forced to depend on low-productivity, labour-intensive sectors such as agriculture and retail trade, often characterized by high informality. As a result, the vast majority, or around 82 per cent, of the continent's workers are in the informal economy, making little contribution to value-addition and productivity improvement. Technology-led transformations are therefore needed to attract the youth into sustainable innovative practices such as precision agriculture, biotechnology, blue, digital and orange economies.

The slow structural transformation leads to insufficient decent work opportunities for increasingly educated African youth. This is one of the factors forcing educated workers to emigrate and resulting in brain drain. A considerable proportion, or 17 per cent, of

tertiary-educated adults born in Africa live abroad, most of whom choose high-income countries outside Africa.

Digital transformation is already reshaping the continents' labour market, with significant prospects for job creation and many implications for digital skills. By 2030, 70 per cent of jobs will require basic digital skills, such as mobile communication, and 23 per cent will require intermediate digital skills, such as the ability to use spreadsheet software, especially in the services sector. The demand for digital skills will also emerge at the advanced level as many African firms adopt advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence.

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2 Chapter 2: Transforming TVET in Africa

As the skills needs of the labour markets are changing due to the impact of mega drivers, the TVET systems need to be dynamic and responsive to realise the vision of the AU as enshrined in the Agenda 2063. The new Continental TVET Strategy⁴ is a crucial and promising step in this direction, focusing on recommendations for transforming national TVET systems to make them high-quality, efficient and responsive to the needs of African people, productive sectors and fast changing labour markets, including due to technological and climate changes. The strategy contributes to achieving the African Union (AU)'s vision, Agenda 2063, and 2030 SDGs.

This chapter informs vision, mission, strategic objectives and guiding principles for transforming TVET in Africa.

2.1 Vision of the African Union

The vision of the AU is that of “*An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena.*” The TVET sub-sector is critical to the realization of the African Union Vision through the development of requisite skills for Africa’s workforce.

2.2 Mission of Continental TVET strategy

To cultivate a globally competitive, skilled and innovative African workforce in line with the aspirations of the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals 2030.

2.3 Strategic Objectives

The two strategic objectives of the African Continental TVET Strategy 2034 are to guide:

⁴ This draft Strategy has benefitted from the evaluation of the Continental TVET strategy for Africa adopted in 2015, input from a multistakeholder drafting committee, extensive review of literature and recommendations on TVET from esteemed organisations such as the African Union and its organs, African Development Bank, International Labour Organisation, ADEA, UNESCO, World Bank, Commonwealth of Learning, UNIDO, OECD, the European Commission.

- Member States on developing and implementing transformative, relevant, inclusive national TVET policy and systems, contributing to sustainable development, economic growth, social justice, enhanced employability and productivity in Africa;
- The African Union and its institutions and organs, including RECs, RMs, AUDA-NEPAD, Member States, and partners in implementing the strategy.

Based on research and experiences, this strategy recommends four foundational pillars and three interrelated guiding principles or priorities to transform TVET in Africa. These insights, derived from comprehensive reviews of training outcomes and current continental TVET strategies, ensure a practical and well-rounded approach to enhancing the quality, relevance, attractiveness and inclusiveness of TVET.

The four complementary and mutually reinforcing foundations for promoting an effective national TVET system are:

1. Policy, Governance and Finance
2. Quality and Inclusion
3. Partnerships, Knowledge and Resource Sharing
4. Institutional Development, Technology and Innovation

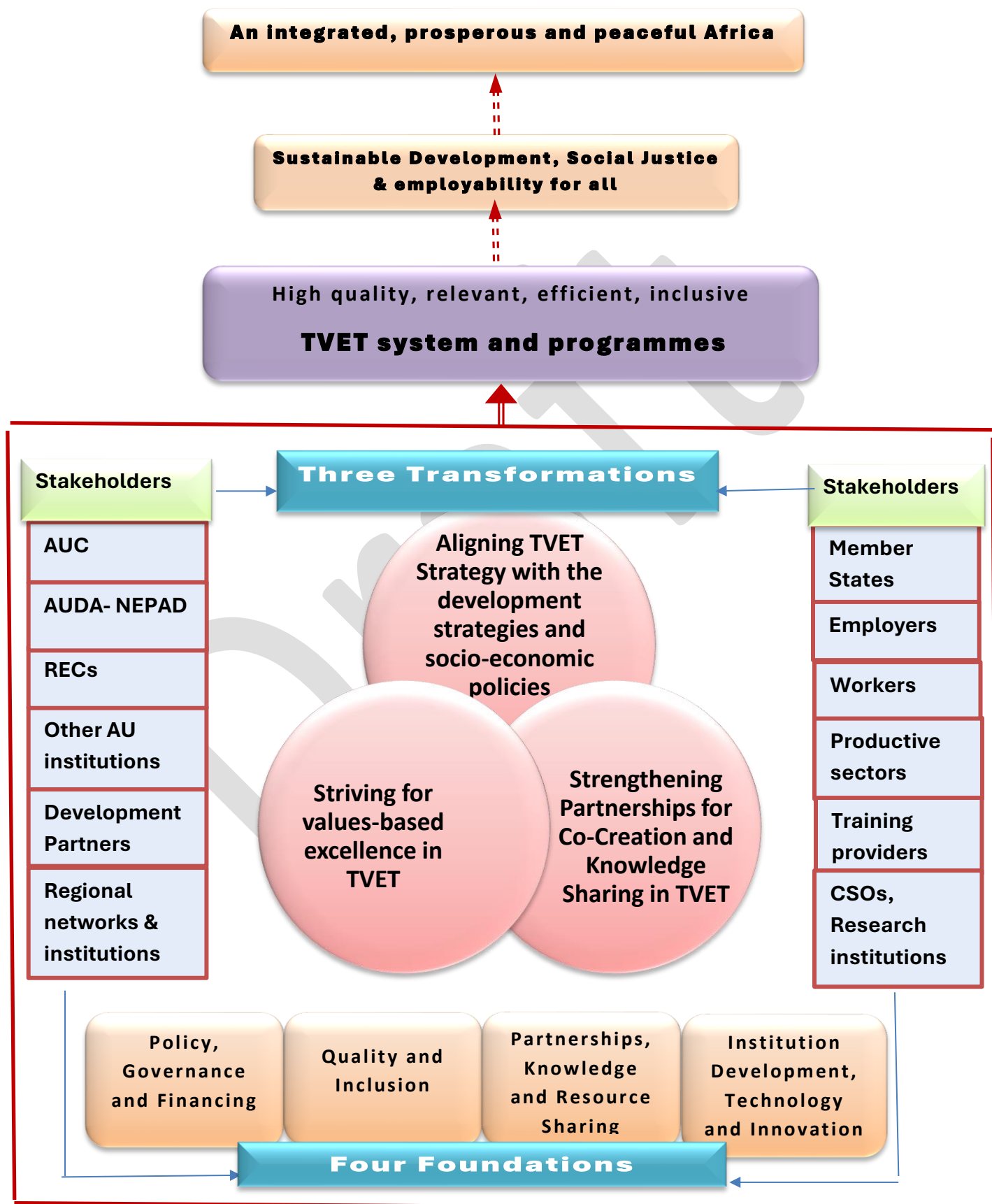
The strategy also suggests measures to establish or strengthen these foundations mentioned in the next chapter.

2.4 Guiding principles for transforming TVET

The three interrelated guiding principles that underline the transformation of TVET in Africa are:

1. Aligning TVET strategy with the development strategies and socio-economic policies
2. Striving for values-based excellence in TVET
3. Strengthening Partnerships for Co-Creation and Knowledge Sharing in TVET

Figure 1: TVET for lifelong employability for all contributing to sustainable development and social justice in Africa⁵



⁵ Sources: Based on the suggestions of the drafting committee for this strategy, World Bank, ILO & UNESCO (2023); AfDB & ILO (2023).

2.4.1 Aligning TVET strategy with the development strategies and socio-economic policies

Skills development is not an end. It plays a pivotal role in promoting decent employment, productivity, competitiveness, inclusive economic and sustainable growth, and personal development. To realize these objectives, it is of utmost importance to align the TVET strategy with the development strategy, socio-economic, industrial, trade, technology, energy, sectoral and education policies. This alignment is not just a recommendation, but a crucial step towards achieving national development goals. This alignment fosters structural transformation, aligns training with the needs of the productive sector, and enhances the outcome of TVET programmes.

Given the prevalence of large informal economies, including rural economies, in most African economies, it is crucial to address their needs. These needs are often overlooked by formal TVET systems, and it is our responsibility to ensure inclusivity in our strategies.

Furthermore, TVET strategies should leverage sectoral approaches that align with national and regional priority sectors, supporting structural transformation and economic diversification, for example from extractive and agriculture sectors to manufacturing sector. This sector-specific focus will ensure that TVET programs are relevant and responsive to the demands of the current and future labour market, particularly in sectors and industries critical for economic development.

2.4.2 Striving for values-based excellence in TVET

A commitment to excellence in TVET is essential for developing a skilled, adaptable, and innovative workforce that can drive sustainable economic and social progress.

Promoting excellence in TVET requires systems and institutions to respond adeptly to the needs of the economy, productive sectors, and community while aligning with learners' aspirations.

TVET providers, in their quest for excellence, must prioritize training outcomes rather than just focusing on inputs. They should anticipate labour market trends, upcoming challenges, and opportunities. They should proactively address challenges and take advantage of the opportunities by offering creative, innovative solutions. A key part of this is establishing strong, values-based autonomous, and accountable institutions supported by competent staff and sufficient resources. This foundation is crucial for the system to adapt, innovate, and maintain high training standards, ultimately fostering a skilled and responsive workforce.

2.4.3 Strengthening Partnerships for Co-Creation and Knowledge Sharing in TVET

Partnerships are vital in addressing the multifaceted challenges of TVET, as no single country or institution has all the resources and expertise to tackle them alone. Many countries face similar issues, and while some have developed solutions to some challenges, comprehensive answers still need to be discovered. Rather than reinventing the wheel, countries should collaborate by sharing resources such as frameworks, strategies, toolkits, guidelines, occupational standards, learning materials, assessment tools, online courses, expert insights, and good practices.

These partnerships should operate on multiple levels:

- **Integration with Social Partners and Productive Sectors:** Establish partnerships with social partners and the productive sector at all stages of TVET, from policy formulation and program development to implementation and evaluation. A key emphasis should be on promoting work-based learning opportunities and school to work programmes for all trainees.
- **Regional Cooperation:** Foster collaborations among African countries, regulatory and research institutions, and Centres of Excellence through AUC, RECs, and other regional bodies and networks to harmonize efforts.
- **South-South and Triangular Cooperation:** Encourage South-South exchanges and triangular cooperation to leverage expertise and innovative solutions among developed and developing nations.
- **Engagement with Development Partners and UN Agencies:** Strengthen ties with development partners and UN agencies to access additional resources, technical expertise, and global good practices.

By leveraging these diverse partnerships, countries can co-create innovative approaches, adapt resources from other countries to their context, optimize resource use, and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of TVET across the continent.

3 Chapter 3: Strengthening Foundations for TVET Development in Africa

This chapter recommends specific measures to Member States to strengthen four complementary and mutually reinforcing foundations for promoting an effective TVET system contributing to sustainable development, social justice, employability and productivity in Africa.

3.1 Policy, governance and finance

This foundation provides recommendations for an effective TVET policy and its coherence with the development strategy and other relevant policies. It also suggests measures for strengthening governance, developing sustainable, equitable, transparent funding models, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and promoting awareness.

3.1.1 Policy and Coherence

Member States Should:

- a) develop and implement a national TVET policy aligned with the Continental TVET Strategy, national development strategy and relevant policies⁶;
- b) develop an enabling environment for the participation of representatives of all relevant stakeholders⁷ through social dialogue in the development and implementation of TVET policies and programmes;
- c) ensure TVET policies promote a culture of lifelong learning, allowing individuals to upgrade their skills, through reskilling and upskilling, throughout their careers;
- d) ensure that policies are based on robust evidence, reflecting information from the assessment of labour market trends and monitoring and evaluation system;
- e) demonstrate high-level commitment to TVET by including it as a strategic component in national development strategies and policies, setting national goals, introducing legislative support and allocating adequate resources.

⁶ Such as education, industrial, trade, science and technology, sectoral.

⁷ Such as employers and workers organisations, associations of productive sectors, TVET authorities and providers, employment services, informal sector associations, civil society, development partners, and trainers.

3.1.2 Governance

Member States should:

- a) establish effective coordination mechanisms and social dialogue at various levels – at the national level to promote interministerial coordination and policy coherence; at the sector level for sharing information about skills demands and supply to improve planning and the delivery of training; at the local level for aligning training to the needs of the local labour market; and at the regional level for promoting recognition of skills, labour mobility and knowledge sharing;
- b) establish or designate one or more public authorities responsible for regulating TVET, in which all crucial stakeholders, including employers and workers organisations, are represented;
- c) ensure that the competent authorities established in (b) above have clearly defined responsibilities, are adequately funded and work in close cooperation with other authorities or institutions responsible for regulating or delivering education and training, labour inspection, social protection, occupational safety and health, and public and private employment services;
- d) support the establishment of sector skills bodies⁸ in the priority sectors to match sectors' demand for skills with training provision, analyse and anticipate future labour market and skill needs, and assess the quality and relevance of training programmes;
- e) strengthen public TVET institutions by granting autonomy, engaging representatives of local industry, including employers and workers organisation, community, staff and trainees in its governance and boosting capacity to improve their performance and accountability.

3.1.3 Financing

Member States should:

- a) establish sustainable funding for TVET through mobilising resources from diverse sources⁹ and using innovative financing mechanisms¹⁰;

⁸ Sector skills bodies is a broader term that includes autonomous councils and advisory committees.

⁹ such as government, productive sector, multilateral and bilateral development partners, international NGOs, philanthropic organisations, community, trainees and alumni.

¹⁰ such as education bonds, levies and impact financing

- b) encourage contributions from productive sector through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, industry partnerships, direct investments in TVET institutions and programs, and work-based learning;
- c) take measures to benchmark cost of TVET programmes and improve efficiency by optimising the use of facilities and resources;
- d) provide grants, targeted subsidies and incentives to ensure affordability for all trainees, particularly women, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups;
- e) provide targeted incentives and support services to micro and small enterprises to offer work-based learning;
- f) prioritise investment in skills training for emerging occupations and jobs.

3.1.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

Members States should:

- a) mandate the regulatory body to develop a monitoring and evaluation system, including performance indicators for TVET institutions and programmes;
- b) take measures to regularly monitor and evaluate TVET systems, institutions, training providers and programmes, including apprenticeships, to review their effectiveness, efficiency and inclusiveness;
- c) use information from the M&E system to review and improve TVET policies, systems, and programmes regularly.

3.1.5 Awareness and Advocacy

Member States should:

- a) motivate productive sector leaders to champion TVET, raising its profile and highlighting its importance for national economic growth and social development;
- b) implement awareness campaigns, leverage media and promote role models to showcase success stories to promote the image and attractiveness of TVET to the trainees, parents, community, workers and employers organisations;
- c) raise awareness about the benefits and processes of RPL among employers and workers organisations, and communities, especially informal economy workers and rural communities.

3.2 Quality and inclusion

This foundation provides recommendations for fostering quality and inclusivity in TVET programmes. It also suggests measures for strengthening skills intelligence, and designing, delivering, and recognising lifelong learning. Furthermore, it provides guidance on promoting access and equity for women and vulnerable groups, such as those in the informal and rural economy, ensuring that everyone can equally benefit from TVET programmes.

3.2.1 Skills intelligence

Member States should:

- a) develop the national capacity to assess the current and future demand for skills as a basis for forward-looking policy making, programme development and career guidance;
- b) develop and maintain robust mechanisms, such as labour market information systems, the latest technologies and tools, and regular consultations with employers and workers organizations, to identify mismatches between skills, jobs and aspirations.

3.2.2 Design, delivery and recognition of lifelong learning and programmes

Member States should:

- a) establish robust systems for quality assurance, including infrastructure, training design, delivery, assessment and certification, recognition of prior learning and career development support systems;
- b) establish quality occupation-specific standards for TVET programmes that provide, among other things, for:
 - any educational qualifications, attainments or prior learning required for admission,
 - the expected duration of the programme, and the extent to which it may be reduced based on prior learning or progress made during the programme,
 - learning outcomes and curricula based on relevant occupational competencies,
 - the qualifications and experience required for trainers and other experts involved in the programme,
 - the procedures for assessing and certifying the competencies acquired,

- the qualification acquired on the successful completion of the programme;
- c) prescribe the standards and conditions under which:
- enterprises may offer work-based learning (mentorship, internships and apprenticeships),
 - training institutions may provide training,
 - intermediaries may coordinate, support or assist in the provision of TVET, programmes, including apprenticeships;
- d) ensure the availability of good quality basic education as a foundation for TVET;
- e) put in place flexible and permeable pathways for smooth transitions of learners within general education and TVET at all levels;
- f) promote work-based learning component through internships and apprenticeships in TVET programmes;
- g) offer values-based TVET Training comprising an optimal mix of technical, STEM, entrepreneurship, and core skills - social and emotional skills, cognitive skills, basic digital skills and green skills- in TVET curricula;
- h) develop modular competency-based TVET curricula and micro-credentials, giving focus on emerging sectors¹¹, and regularly update them;
- i) develop TVET programmes at higher levels in qualification frameworks to meet the needs in specific sectors;
- j) ensure professional development, decent working condition and career progression opportunities for teachers and trainers, assessors and other relevant personnel;
- k) take measures to ensure that apprentices and interns receive high-quality training at the workplace, adequate remuneration, and decent working conditions in accordance with national law and context.

3.2.3 Social inclusion

¹¹Emerging sectors of the economy are based on a country's development strategy to promote job-rich economic growth through economic diversification and transformation. These may include manufacturing, digital, green, blue, and orange sectors.

3.2.3.1 Women and vulnerable groups

Member States should:

- a) implement targeted measures to promote gender equality and social inclusion in TVET and access to employment;
- b) take effective measures to prevent and eliminate any discrimination, violence and harassment and exploitation of trainees and staff within the training eco-system;
- c) ensure TVET infrastructure including buildings and transport are accessible;
- d) promote reskilling and upskilling opportunities tailored to the needs of women, adults and vulnerable groups;
- e) give emphasis to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education for women;
- f) establish needs-based second chance education, bridging and pre-apprenticeship programmes with a focus on increasing the rates of participation, retention and success in TVET;
- g) offer personalized, adaptive and flexible learning, including through digital technology, for adults and vulnerable learners.

3.2.3.2 Migrants and refugees

Member States should:

- a) develop and implement agreements for the mutual recognition of TVET qualifications and skills across countries to facilitate fair migration or skilled labour export to other countries including through the introduction of an “Africa Skills Passport”;
- b) provide support for returning migrants, including through the recognition of skills gained abroad, and providing skilling or upskilling to facilitate reintegration into the local labour market;
- c) develop systems for sharing information on skills gaps and migration among African countries.

3.2.3.3 Informal Economy

Member States should:

- a) strengthen the capacity of associations of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), including through financial support, to improve the quality of apprenticeships;
- b) strengthen the capacity of MSMEs by facilitating access to business development and financial services, improving the occupational safety and health environment, enhancing the teaching and training methods and the technical and entrepreneurial competencies of master craft persons;
- c) ensure that apprentices have access to off-the-job learning and may complement their on-the-job learning in other enterprises or through intermediaries, where appropriate;
- d) adopt recognition of prior learning system to certify the competencies of a person, including apprentices, and encourage the provision of upskilling courses to bridge the skills gap;
- e) provide subsidies and financial incentives to individuals in the informal economy for skilling, upskilling and reskilling.

3.2.3.4 Rural economy

Member States should:

- a) set up TVET centres in rural and remote areas to improve access to people living in those areas;
- b) encourage formal sector enterprises to provide guidance, training, internships, and employment opportunities to trainees in rural TVET centres;
- c) establish mobile training units to reach out to rural and remote areas;
- d) improve ICT infrastructure in rural areas and make it accessible and affordable for education and training purposes;
- e) encourage civil society, community organizations and other stakeholders to provide training and support services to people in the informal and rural areas.

3.3 Partnerships, knowledge and resource sharing

This foundation provides recommendations for fostering strong partnerships between TVET institutions and the productive sector at all levels, which helps align skills supply to demand. It also suggests measures for enhancing international and regional cooperation and resource pooling.

3.3.1 Linkage between productive sector and TVET

Member States should:

- a) create an enabling framework for promoting partnerships with the productive sector in TVET at all levels;
- b) ensure sufficient representation of productive sector and social partners in the governance of TVET regulatory bodies;
- c) use sectoral approaches to build close collaboration through social dialogue between the TVET system, productive sector and social partners for the design, delivery and review of skills strategy and programmes;
- d) foster strong partnerships between TVET training institutions and productive sectors through joint governance of the training institute and implementing dual training programmes;
- e) recognise and publicise good practices in the collaboration between the productive sector and TVET institutions, rewarding the representatives of the productive sector and TVET institutions and providing targeted incentives especially for MSMEs;
- f) build the capacity of TVET institutions in the areas of leadership and partnership development, including by establishing units with responsibility for creating and maintaining partnerships with enterprises and workplaces;
- g) promote career guidance and employment services through a collaboration with key stakeholders including the productive sector.

3.3.2 Regional and international collaboration and resource pooling

Member States should:

- a) enhance international, continental, regional and national cooperation and share information and resources in all aspects of TVET;
- b) collaborate in the establishment of regional centres of excellence in key sectors, where countries can pool resources to develop quality standards, curricula, training and assessment methodologies and materials and deliver state-of-the-art training;
- c) create or support networks of TVET institutions and stakeholders across different African countries to share good practices, curricula, and resources;
- d) support the growth of a pool of experts in different domains of TVET;
- e) work towards mutual recognition of TVET qualifications and skills across African countries to facilitate mobility of skilled labour and enhance employability;

- f) leverage existing regional, continental and global online platforms to share research, data, and success stories and to facilitate peer learning;
- g) host events that bring together stakeholders from different countries to discuss challenges, promising practices and strategies in TVET;
- h) promote exchange programs that allow apprentices, trainees, trainers and other staff to gain experience and skills in different countries, promoting a culture of learning and cooperation.

3.4 Institutional development, Technology and Innovation

This foundation provides recommendations for strengthening the capacity of institutions and staff in the TVET ecosystem. It also suggests measures to enhance research, innovation, and entrepreneurship and to promote the digital transformation of TVET systems and programmes.

3.4.1 Institutional and capacity Development

Member States should take measures to:

- a) develop and implement a comprehensive capacity-building framework, which leverages technology and innovative approaches and covers policymakers, employers and workers organisations, professional associations, managers, experts, teachers, trainers, master craft persons, and other staff in the TVET eco-system;
- b) provide support and capacity-building for local institutions, enterprises and other organizations involved in planning and delivering TVET programs, including in rural and informal economies;
- c) foster the capacity of enterprises, specially MSMEs including those in the rural and informal economy, to absorb new knowledge and skills;
- d) train trainers in innovative and learner-centred training methodologies, including the use of technology in face-to-face and virtual learning environments;
- e) train assessors in modern assessment and evaluation methods, including the use of technology;
- f) develop the capacity of trainers and staff on inclusive training practices;
- g) support initiatives to develop the capacity in research methodologies and data analysis, management information systems, labour market information,

monitoring and evaluation, and using information for evidence-based policy and decision-making.

3.4.2 Research, innovation and entrepreneurship

Member States should:

- a) promote a culture of research, innovation and creativity in TVET institutions to develop and implement new ideas and approaches to continuously improve systems, processes and programmes;
- b) support the development of partnerships with universities, development partners, TVET centres of excellence, stakeholder networks, authorities in other regions, research centres and think tanks to jointly take up research and developing innovative solutions for TVET challenges;
- c) develop policies and legislations that guide and protect intellectual properties;
- d) encourage innovation and entrepreneurship by supporting the development of TVET innovation and incubation hubs and linking them to potential Investors.

3.4.3 Digital transformation of systems, process and programmes

Member States should:

- a) create an enabling environment to facilitate digital transformation by developing comprehensive digitalization strategies, including integration into TVET programmes, that support skills and lifelong learning systems through affordable and innovative technologies and other measures to reduce the digital divide and digital gender gap;
- b) support the adoption of digital technology to automate TVET processes for skills intelligence, quality assurance, transfer of subsidies and incentives, assessment and certification, monitoring and evaluation.

4 Chapter 4: Implementation of TVET Strategy

This chapter informs guiding principles for implementation, the roles and responsibilities of the African Union and its organs, the implementation support mechanism, and the monitoring and evaluation.

4.1 Guiding principles for implementation

The following principles will guide the implementation of the continental TVET strategy:

- **Country ownership and leadership:** Member States are primarily responsible for adapting and implementing this strategy's recommendations to their context.
- **Respect of subsidiarity:** Ensure that decision-making authority lies with those who are responsible for delivering outcomes and taking action.
- **Accountability:** Define precise roles and responsibilities to enhance accountability and establish a robust feedback loop, ensuring clarity and ownership.
- **Agility:** Fostering agility is a crucial aspect of the strategy's implementation. This is achieved by creating flexible structures and processes that can quickly adapt to the ever-changing landscape of the workplace, ensuring the strategy remains relevant and effective.
- **Advocacy and support:** Providing advice and support to Member States is desirable in promoting and implementing this Strategy

4.2 Roles and responsibilities

Successful implementation of TVET Strategy 2025-34 requires identifying the main institutions responsible for coordination and implementation and clarifying their roles and responsibilities at continental, subregional and country levels. Each identified stakeholder should fulfil their respective mandates effectively. The AUC, RECs, AUDA-NEPAD, will use their convening power in coordinating the implementation arrangements of the strategy particularly as far as continental or regional components of the strategy are concerned. Member States will lead stakeholder engagement such as , social partners, productive sector, international multi-laterals bodies, bilateral partners, networks, research institutions, think tanks, non-governmental organisations,

philanthropic initiatives, and community with a stake in skills development for an ever-evolving world of work.

4.2.1 African Union Commission

As the Secretariat of the African Union, the AUC shall have the following roles:

- (a) providing political leadership in initiating policy processes aimed at addressing specific TVET issues of the Continental TVET Strategy, including through its decision-making structures, notably the Specialized Technical Committee on Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (STC-EST), the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC), the Executive Council and the Assembly of the African Union Heads of States and Governments (AU Summit);
- (b) promoting and advocating the adoption and implementation of the Continental TVET Strategy and STC-EST decisions related to skills development and employment creation;
- (c) encourage high profile stakeholders such as Heads of state, ministers, parliamentarians and productive sector leaders to champion TVET, raising its profile and highlighting its importance for national economic growth and social development;
- (d) coordinating and hosting continental dialogue platforms and forums for experience sharing and the promotion of skills development and employment in Member States;
- (e) engaging the RECs and other relevant stakeholders in jointly coordinating and harmonising TVET policies, programmes and tools through social dialogue.

4.2.2 African Union Development Agency - NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD)

The AUDA-NEPAD shall have the following roles:

- (a) coordinating and implementing continental priority projects and pilot initiatives aligned to the Continental TVET Strategy;
- (b) providing technical advisory support to African Union Member States and RECs in the implementation of the Continental TVET Strategy through the development and dissemination of implementation guidance tools;
- (c) coordinating Communities of Practice (CoPs) and the TVET Cluster to facilitate collaboration, generation and the exchange of knowledge, good practices, innovative solutions, and lessons learned among stakeholders involved in TVET in Africa;
- (d) overseeing and tracking of the implementation and evaluation of the strategy.

4.2.3 Regional economic communities (RECs)

The RECS shall have the following roles:

- (a) providing technical advisory support to member states to take ownership of the continental TVET strategy;
- (b) integrating the continental TVET strategy objectives and principles within regional priorities and programmes;
- (c) encouraging regional and inter-regional networking to share knowledge, tools and resources for successful adoption at country level;
- (d) enhancing awareness and advocacy of the TVET strategy among Members States, social partners, the productive sector, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders and facilitate its implementation;
- (e) engaging the AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and other relevant stakeholders in jointly coordinating and harmonising TVET policies and programmes.

4.3 Implementation support mechanisms

The successful implementation of the continental TVET strategy will require following actions.

4.3.1 Policy and technical advisory support

The implementing entities, in collaboration with and support of other partners at their respective levels, shall endeavour to:

- (a) developing and disseminating new tools and methodologies on TVET to meet the needs of Member States;
- (b) carrying out high-quality research on skills systems and challenges and evaluate TVET initiatives taken by countries to generate knowledge on good practices and lessons learned;
- (c) providing evidence-based advice on regional, national, and sectoral policies and programmes on TVET;
- (d) facilitating and promoting knowledge exchange and dissemination of good practices and lessons learned from international experiences, including through South-South and triangular cooperation, Community of Practices, and Innovation Network;

- (e) coordinating the conceptualization/design and guide the implementation of flagship pilot projects and initiatives on skills development in select Member States and share experiences and lessons for potential scale-up.

4.3.2 Resource mobilization

The implementing entities, in collaboration with partners, shall endeavour to mobilize resources for the implementation support, as well as for the coordination, advisory, advocacy and Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) functions through:

- (a) organizing funding dialogues for TVET at continental, sub-regional and national levels and strengthening partnerships with a range of donors and development partners;
- (b) advocating with Regional and International Financial Institutions, Multilateral Development Banks, and sovereign donors for more significant investment in TVET systems and supporting the implementation of continental, sub-regional, and national policies, and strategies and programmes;
- (c) supporting the Member States to improve the transparency and effectiveness of their operations and diversifying their financing options for TVET.

4.3.3 Communication and advocacy

To further strengthen the status and attractiveness of TVET and raise its profile in the political agenda and ensure integration/adoption/alignment of the Continental TVET strategy provisions into national plans, the implementing entities in collaboration with their partners shall endeavour to:

- a) undertaking regular and large-scale continental, regional and national communication, and promotional campaigns for TVET;
- (a) systematically documenting the benefits of TVET in the form of impactful stories and disseminate widely to the public at continental, regional level and other international fora and platforms;
- (b) regularly holding continental high-level events on TVET, such as Africa Skills Week, and WorldSkills Africa, to raise the image of TVET. The TVET events may be replicated at all relevant levels;
- (c) effectively engaging and mobilising public and private media in the promotional campaign.
- (d) advocating for increased visibility and role of TVET as enabler to achieving continental aspiration of the Africa we want in relevant continental events;

- (e) utilising continental and regional online platforms such as the African Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship (**ASPYEE**) to promote, disseminate and facilitate exchange of information, tools, and good practice.

The support mechanisms will be actualized through ongoing projects and programmes and newly proposed initiatives relevant to TVET.

4.4 Stakeholders' engagement and Coordination

The implementation of the continental TVET strategy will be achieved through robust and active participation, engagement, and contribution of all stakeholders in the Skills development sector. These include relevant multisectoral government Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs), development partners, employers and workers organisations, sectoral and professional bodies, productive sector, and other players.

For optimal engagement, complementarity and coherence, the coordinating and implementing entities shall promote stakeholders' engagement through:

- a) Establishing and strengthening dialogue platforms, such as the TVET cluster, while broadening memberships for more inclusive representation. These platforms should be established at all levels of implementation and coordination.
- b) Jointly organising continental and regional TVET events, fostering knowledge sharing, advocacy, and resources mobilization efforts.

4.5 Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation

The strategy covers 2025-34, matching the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan (STYIP) cycle of the Agenda 2063. A monitoring and evaluation framework shall be developed with clear indicators and targets, which must be aligned with continental plans, targets, and indicators.

A mid-term review will take place in 2029, providing inputs for the second phase until 2034. In 2035, a final evaluation will take place on the strategy's outcome and impact. The AU will produce progress monitoring reports in line with the AU reporting schedules.

The implementing entities will develop an implementation action plan for the continental strategy that articulates key milestones to aid the monitoring plan. Member states and RECs are also encouraged to develop or align implementation plans on skills and reporting targets to feed into the continental Strategy reporting framework.

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