

▶ 14th African Region Regional Meeting

Date: October 2021

▶ Mid-term Review of the Implementation Plan of the Abidjan Declaration adopted at the 14th African Regional Meeting

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ACTESA	Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa
ACQF	African continental qualification Framework
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
ALMP	Active Labour Market Policies
AOSTI	African Observatory on Science, Technology and Innovation
APCO	African Productivity Council
ARLAC	African Regional Labour Administration Centre
ARM	Africa Regional Meeting
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUDA	African Union Development Agency
BDS	Business development services
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CEACR	Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations
CIE	Confederation of IGAD Employers
COVID	Coronavirus disease
CRADAT	Centre Régional Africain d'Administration du Travail
DC	Development cooperation
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
EABC	East African Business Council
EAC	East African Community
EATUC	East African Trade Union Confederation
EBMO	Employer or business membership organisation
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EESE	Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises
EII	Employment-intensive investments
EIIP	Employment-intensive investment programme
EPIC	Equal Pay International Coalition
EYB	Expand your Business
FOPAO	Federation of West African Employers' Organisations
FRWA	Rwandan franc
GAN	Global Apprenticeship Network

GB	Governing Body
GDP	Gross domestic product
GET	Gender and Entrepreneurship Together
GJAM	Green Jobs Assessment Models
HACTU	Horn of Africa Confederation of Trade Unions
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Office or Organization
ILS	International labour standards
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPAD2019	Implementation Plan of the Abidjan Declaration
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
ITC	International Training Centre
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
JLMP	Joint Labour Migration Programme
KAB	Know about business
KUFMET	Kiosk Unique for Micro Enterprises and Workers
LMAC	Labour Migration Advisory Committee
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
MLC	Maritime Labour Convention
MNE	Multinational enterprises
MTR	Mid-term review
NDC	Nationally determined contribution
NEDLAC	National Economic Development and Labour Council
NEET	Neither in employment, education or training
NEP	National employment policy
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OATUU	Organization for African Trade Union Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHADA	Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa

OTUWA	Organization of Trade Unions of West Africa
PAPA	Pan-African Productivity Association
PFJ	Planting for Food and Jobs
PIDA	Programme for Infrastructure Development In Africa
RB	Regular Budget
RBSA	Regular Budget Supplementary Account
RBTC	Regular Budget for Technical Cooperation
RDWP	Regional Decent Work Programmes
REC	Regional Economic Community
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the Role of Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forests and Enhancement of Forest Carbon Stocks in Developing Countries
ROAF	Regional Office for Africa (ILO)
RPL	Recognition of prior learning
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SATUCC	Southern Africa Trade Union Coordinating Council
SCORE	Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIYB	Start and Improve your Business
SME	Small and medium enterprise
SPSF	SADC Private Sector Forum
SSE	Social and solidarity economy
STC-SDLE	Specialised Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment
STISA	Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UCESA	Union of Economic and Social Councils of Africa
UHC	Universal health insurance coverage
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks
WACOMP	West African Competitiveness Programme

WBL	Work-based learning
WED	Women's entrepreneurship development
WFCL	Worst forms of child labour
WFP	World Food Programme
XBDC	Extrabudgetary funds for development cooperation

Preface

I am pleased to present the report of the Mid-term Review of the Implementation Plan of the Abidjan Declaration: *Advancing Social Justice-Shaping the future of work in Africa*, which was adopted at the 14th ILO Africa Regional Meeting in December 2019.

As I write this Foreword, as in many parts of the globe, Africa is still going through the COVID-19 pandemic. The detection of new variants of COVID-19 inevitably causes several uncertainties for the world of work that has already been severely impacted by the evolving dynamics of the pandemic since 2020. The latest global estimates and country level data corroborates this trend: overall, the crisis has resulted in significant employment deficits and low productivity which persist in most countries. At the same time vaccination rollouts have emerged as a critical factor for labour market recovery.¹

The present report, prepared in response to paragraph 5² of the Abidjan Declaration, provides an overview of the inspiring efforts made by governments, workers' and employers' organisations in Africa to implement the Abidjan Declaration through its Implementation Plan (IPAD2019). The tripartite constituents' commitment to, and ownership of, the Abidjan Declaration is demonstrated by their very high rate of response to the Office's questionnaire on the status of its implementation at the national, regional and continental levels.

The report's seven chapters and 37 action areas cover a wide spectrum of professional interventions in support of the Decent Work Agenda and address the most essential aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The report, while revealing the diversity, complexity and relevance of ILO's mandate in Africa and globally, also showcases the interrelatedness and complementarity of ILO's interventions on the continent. In fact, each of the 37 action areas would make sense on its own; but as elements of the Decent Work Agenda, they are interrelated and mutually reinforced for a greater impact. I would like to draw your attention to the text boxes inserted into the main report, because those boxes further highlight and translate the conceptual orientation of the action areas into concrete progress made.

I would like to recall that the year 2019, when the Abidjan Declaration was agreed upon, was a year of celebration for the ILO: the organization's centennial celebrations, the commemoration of 60 years of ILO presence in Africa, and the solemn adoption of the ILO Centenary Declaration for the future of work. Regrettably, the following year was marked by the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent drastic measures that African nations had to take in order to control the spread and mitigate its impacts. It is noteworthy that the Implementation Plan of the Abidjan Declaration, submitted to the 340th Session of the Governing Body in October 2020, was developed with due consideration, to the extent possible, of the impact of the COVID-19, as well as possible response measures. Despite the challenging circumstances of the pandemic, it is even more impressive and heartening to note the progress made by the African constituents to implement the Abidjan Declaration.

The present report covers only the first half of the four-year period of the Abidjan Declaration and its implementation plan. As requested by the 340th Session of the ILO Governing Body, I would like to encourage our constituents and development partners to take the Abidjan Declaration and its Implementation Plan into consideration when implementing current programmes and in developing future programmes. This is particularly important for those areas where progress lags behind or where the challenges remain huge.

I invite you to learn more about Africa's achievements as the region implements the 2019 Abidjan Declaration. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the African member states, employers' and workers' organizations, ILO offices in the region and technical departments at HQ, the African Union Commission and the Regional Economic Communities for their valuable inputs and support for this Mid-Term Review. I look forward to receiving your feedback which will help the Office to better support African constituents in *Advancing Social Justice and Shaping the future of work in Africa*.

Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon
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Regional Director for Africa

¹ ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work. Eighth edition, Updated estimates and analysis, Oct. 2021.

² "The mid-term review is to take place in 2021 on the margins of the 4th Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment to be held in Eswatini".

Introduction

The 14th ILO African Regional Meeting held in Abidjan in December 2019 adopted the [Abidjan Declaration - Advancing Social Justice: Shaping the future of work in Africa](#), known as the Abidjan Declaration. In its paragraph 2, the Abidjan Declaration requests the Office to provide constituents with enhanced support to achieve the priorities identified therein by developing an implementation plan, presented to the 338th Session (March 2020) of the Governing Body (GB). Subsequently, the Office in consultation with constituents developed an [Implementation Plan supplementing the Abidjan Declaration](#) (IPAD2019), which was adopted during the 340th Session of the Governing Body in October–November 2020 with the [Report of the 14th African Regional Meeting \(Abidjan, 3–6 December 2019\)](#). The IPAD2019 is fully aligned with the ILO programme and budget, and with overarching frameworks, such as the African Union Agenda 2063.

In its paragraph 5, the Abidjan Declaration requested the office to prepare a mid-term review to be presented in the margins of the 4th Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment to be held in Eswatini towards the end of 2021. In compliance with this request, the Regional Office for Africa has prepared the present report. The report is based on a set of questionnaires developed by the Office for constituents at the national level, the regional level (RECs)³ and the continental level, plus a specific questionnaire for the three African labour administration centres. The mid-term review report is being complemented by the ILO Programme Implementation Report 2020–21, to be submitted to the Governing Body session in March 2022. The questionnaires at the national, regional and continental levels were meant to be completed by governments, employers' and workers' organizations and ILO offices. Out of 54 African member States, 49 governments, 37 employers' organizations and 31 trade unions completed the questionnaire, some with very detailed information and background material, others providing just rudimentary facts.⁴ The ILO offices in the region provided information on 51 countries, highlighting the ILO support to constituents during the reporting period. In addition, questionnaires were received from the constituents at the African Union level and from six of the eight AU-recognized RECs. Two of the three labour administration centres returned completed questionnaires as well. In total, the constituents of the African region contributed over 870 pages of text. Quite naturally, the report can present only a very succinct summary of such a wealth of information, which constitutes a very useful baseline for the 37 action areas of the IPAD2019 contained in the present report. In addition to compiling and analysing the questionnaires, telephone interviews were conducted with selected constituents from Algeria, Cameroon, Eswatini, Kenya, Nigeria and Rwanda, and continental social partners. The insights gained from those interviews are reflected in the report.

The mid-term review (MTR) seeks to assess, on the basis of the questionnaire and additional information sources, if the level of achievement of the IPAD2019 for the period 6 December 2019 (when the Abidjan Declaration was adopted) to 30 September 2021 can be deemed satisfactory. This was believed to be the case when 50 per cent or more of the *government* respondents reported action under the various IPAD2019 work areas. The threshold of 50 per cent was determined since the mid-term review covers only half of the duration of the IPAD2019. A level of 25 per cent or more was judged acceptable, and anything below 25 per cent as critically delayed. Hence, each sub-section bears a green marker (satisfactory), a yellow marker (acceptable), or a red marker (critically delayed). The percentages inserted into the marker refer to the proportion of governments that have taken measures related to the respective action area.

This report is organized around the seven IPAD2019 work areas and the 37 action areas contained therein. Each action area is structured as follows:

- ▶ The marker (green, yellow, red).
- ▶ An introductory text situating the subject within the context of the world of work and the ILO.
- ▶ A table summarizing the replies received.
- ▶ A short text categorizing the replies received at the national level and, where appropriate, at the RECs level, and from the labour administration centres.
- ▶ A short summary of the involvement of employers' and workers' organizations and ILO offices.
- ▶ A text box with an illustrative example, taken mostly from the questionnaires.

³ In the African Union, the term "regional" refers to geographic subregions represented by RECs; the ILO means by "region" the five geographic entities covered by regional offices. This report distinguishes between regional activities at the level of RECs, and continental activities covering the entire African continent.

⁴ The lower response rate of the social partners has an impact on the summary tables under each action area. In almost all cases, the involvement of social partners in those areas is less pronounced than the government's involvement, which is not necessarily due to insufficient social dialogue, but a reflection of the lower response rate.

It should be noted that in some cases, activities reported by the constituents were taken prior to the adoption of the Abidjan Declaration; those activities can of course not be attributed to the IPAD2019. However, in cases where those activities referred to the establishment of institutions, or the formulation of national plans and strategies that included the IPAD2019 period (partly or entirely), they were considered relevant. Similarly, while it would be presumptuous to claim that the activities presented in this report are, without exception, a direct outcome of the IPAD2019 and the underlying Abidjan Declaration, one can reasonably argue that all of them are the fruit of social dialogue and the quest for decent work and social justice

Finally, the mid-term review covers a period which was almost entirely characterized by the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and the efforts by governments to contain the spread of the disease. This has, of course, severely affected the ability of constituents to take developmental action, since additional resources were needed to combat the virus. Against this background, it is remarkable to notice that relatively few questionnaires mention COVID-19. This may be seen as an indicator for the robustness and resilience of the African tripartite structures which continue functioning even in times of a severe crisis. This notwithstanding, this report contains a short, dedicated section on the impact of, and the response to, the COVID-19 pandemic (see section 10).

1. Decent jobs for Africa, in particular for young women and men

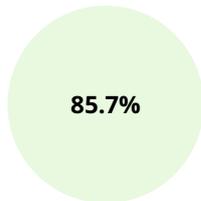
This chapter of the report examines several employment-policy aspects that correspond to related elements of the IPAD2019. Although these aspects are treated individually, there are numerous connections between them. For example, national employment policies (section 1.3) support the mainstreaming of employment in national policies (1.1). Employment-intensive investments (1.8) constitute a facet of active labour market policies (1.9). The promotion of youth employment (1.4) can greatly benefit from integrating entrepreneurship education into national curricula.

1.1. Mainstreaming decent and productive employment in national policies and budgets

Mainstreaming employment – Rwanda’s approach

Rwanda’s national employment policy of 2019 calls for a pro-employment macroeconomic framework through the development of explicit employment indicators and targets in all the sectors of the economy. In order to implement such a pro-employment framework Rwanda’s Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning has included under its Planning & Budget circulars for central and local Government an annex 7, which provides an employment mainstreaming planning template, and captures the number of jobs created through the government budget. This then helps to reorient public expenditures towards the most employment-intensive sectors.

Economic growth alone does not necessarily translate into more and better jobs, especially for the poor, vulnerable and those at risk of being left behind. At the same time, economic growth is a prerequisite for increasing productive employment. The relationship between growth and employment can form part of a **virtuous cycle**: job-rich growth leads to more employment among the population, which raises incomes and purchasing power, which in turn increases aggregate demand in the economy and thus growth itself. The growth-employment-poverty link was the central theme of the African Union Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development, also referred to as “Ouagadougou plus 10”.⁵ The Declaration adopted January 2015 by the African Heads of State places “employment creation as an explicit and central objective of our economic and social policies at



national, regional and continental levels, for sustainable poverty alleviation and with a view to improving the living conditions of our people”. In other words: the Declaration called for the mainstreaming of employment in all national and regional policies and investment programmes. In the same vein, the IPAD2019 called upon constituents to promote the formulation and implementation of comprehensive pro-employment policies, covering macroeconomic, sectoral, investment, and trade policies, driving a process of inclusive structural transformation, targeting the generation of large-scale employment for young women and men, including the most vulnerable groups (including persons with disabilities, persons living with HIV, migrants, refugees, indigenous people. This requires, inter alia, the mainstreaming of decent and productive employment in national plans and budgets and the integration of employment creation as a key variable into the national development planning and budgeting processes.

Mainstreaming employment in national policies				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have mainstreamed employment	Involvement of employers in those efforts	Involvement of workers in those efforts	Involvement of the ILO in those efforts
49	42	31	28	30

The great majority of governments responded that indeed, employment had been effectively mainstreamed in national policies. Employment creation appeared as top priority in most development plans, although several of these plans had been put in place *prior* to the adoption of the IPAD2019; in those cases, the mainstreaming of employment is in line with the IPAD2019, but not a *result* of the IPAD2019. However, a few respondents misinterpreted the underlying question as to whether the country had elaborated a national employment policy. Such policies are important of course, but to become effective they must be reflected in overarching frameworks, such as the country’s national development plans and national budgets.

Very few respondents considered the second element of the questions, that is, whether employment has been reflected in the national *budget*. In fact, it would be desirable to analyse and eventually modify national budgets in view of their employment potential, that is, having a clear and quantifiable budgetary objectives related to employment creation. This will be a critical element to also ensure increased and effective *implementation* of national policies and development plans/frameworks.

⁵ In October 2004, an Extraordinary Summit of the African Union, convened in Ouagadougou, adopted a Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment and Poverty Alleviation. Ten years later, this Plan of Action was reviewed, and provided the basis for the subsequent Declaration.

In most countries, employers' and workers' organizations have been associated with the design of national development plans and/or employment policies, but in a few cases this has not happened. The ILO has been supporting the mainstreaming of employment in national policies and budgets through various means, including financial (e.g., RB, XBDC, RBSA, RBTC) and technical support for the formulation of such policies, the elaboration of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs), the integration of employment into United Nations Sustainable Development Frameworks, or capacity-building measures for constituents.

At the subregional level, the aspect of employment creation has been mainstreamed through the elaboration of regional Decent Work Programmes, which have been approved in Southern Africa (SADC), and are currently being formulated in West Africa (ECOWAS), Central Africa (ECCAS) and East Africa (EAC). The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) member States adopted in October 2021 a Ministerial Declaration on Labour, Employment and Labour Migration. At the continental level, ILO has supported and continues to support the AU and its member states by developing policy guidelines and offering capacity development towards the formulation of "pro-employment macroeconomic and sectoral policies for African countries". Bringing together Ministries of Finance and Ministries of Labour to discuss alternative and employment-focused policy-making is proving to be very important and requires strong support by the office. Such work is also currently ongoing in support to SADC and its member states. Similarly the ITUC-Africa has consistently advocated for the mainstreaming of employment, and has provided its member organizations on the continent with relevant tools, organized awareness campaigns, and provided support for the development of position papers, with a particular emphasis on the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 on economic growth and decent work. Moreover, the Tanzanian trade unions continue utilizing the CEB [toolkit](#) for mainstreaming employment and decent work, while the ITUC-Africa provides support in integrating decent work principles into UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF). The ILO has provided technical support to an AUDA-NEPAD virtual meeting on "Pro-employment Investment on Infrastructure Development" that took place in September 2020.

The African Labour Administration Centres have so far not been involved in the process of mainstreaming employment in national or regional policies.

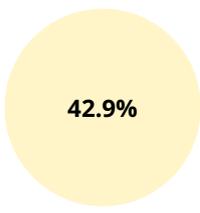
1.2. Ratification and application of the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)

Convention No. 122 is one of ILO's governance (priority) instruments. The Convention provides guidelines concerning employment policy, with a view to stimulating economic growth and development, raising levels of living standards, meeting manpower requirements and overcoming unemployment and underemployment. By ratifying this Convention, member states commit to declare and pursue, as a major goal, an active policy designed to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment. Convention No. 122 contains as strong non-discrimination aspect as it provides for "the fullest possible opportunity for each worker to qualify for, and to use his skills and endowments in, a job for which he is well suited, irrespective of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin.

ILO Convention C.122 in practice: The case of Namibia

Namibia has ratified C.122 in September 2018, and used the instrument to draft a NEP. In early 2020, the ILO, upon request by Government, evaluated this policy and recommended the setting of specific employment creation targets under the national budget. This recommendation was incorporated as pillar 2 of the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP) II (March 2021), under which Government committed to ensuring that its government policies, strategic plans, programmes and ministerial budgets should include Employment Impact Assessments (EIS). The Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, and Employment Creation has been entrusted with the implementation of the EIS.

So far, the Convention has been ratified by 23 African member states (out of a total of 115 ratifications globally); however, none of these ratifications occurred during the IPAD2019 reporting period. A number of countries, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Zimbabwe report their intention to ratify the instrument in the near future. Several of those countries wish to initiate the ratification process once a national employment policy has been adopted. It



42.9%

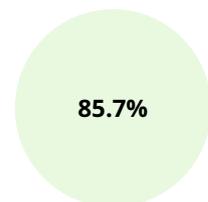
should also be noted that several countries are using Convention No. 122 as a guidance and benchmark for developing employment policies, even if they did not yet ratify the instrument. The African employers' and workers' organizations are generally in favour of ratifying Convention No. 122; this has been the case, for example, in Sao Tome and Principe.

The Office's engagement in support of the ratification and application of Convention No. 122 has been very weak. With the exception of sensitization campaigns organized in a few countries, the ILO offices in the region did not report any assistance in relation to Convention No. 122. However, many ILO offices and technical units have provided support in developing national employment policies, which constitute the application of Convention No. 122 at the national level. It would be desirable to systematically promote the ratification of Convention No. 122 when providing technical assistance for the development of NEPs. Convention No. 122 remains one of the least ratified governance Conventions in the region. The ILO has commissioned an issues paper which confirms that the Convention No. 122 remains highly

relevant for guiding pro-employment policy; they shall serve as a basis for launching a formal campaign for the ratification of Convention No. 122. The labour administration centres report that they have incorporated modules on Convention No. 122 into their curricula.

1.3. National employment policies

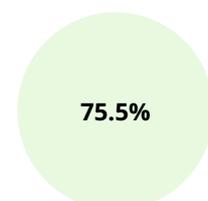
The Abidjan Declaration called upon member States to promote the formulation and implementation of comprehensive pro-employment policies, covering macroeconomic, sectoral, investment, and trade policies, which would drive a process of inclusive structural transformation and target the generation of large-scale employment for young women and men, including the most vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities, persons living with HIV, migrants, indigenous minorities, and others.



ILO Convention C.122 in practice: The case of Namibia

Namibia has ratified C.122 in September 2018, and used the instrument to draft a NEP. In early 2020, the ILO, upon request by Government, evaluated this policy and recommended the setting of specific employment creation targets under the national budget. This recommendation was incorporated as pillar 2 of the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP) II (March 2021), under which the Government committed to ensuring that its government policies, strategic plans, programmes and ministerial budgets should include Employment Impact Assessments (EIS). The Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, and Employment Creation has been entrusted with the implementation of the EIS.

The ILO promotes a comprehensive approach to employment policy, whereby a National Employment Policy (NEP) should elaborate both a vision and a concerted and coherent framework linking all employment policy interventions, as well as all stakeholders – government, workers’ and employers’ organizations, financial institutions, industry and other civil society groups – who have a role to play in reaching employment targets. The content of a NEP will necessarily touch upon a wide array of economic, social and labour market policies that affect both the supply and demand sides of the labour market, as well as the intermediation between them. The NEP can therefore serve as an umbrella for a variety of complementary policies.



As per the 2020–21 Programme and Budget, the ILO is promoting the concept of “gender-responsive new-generation NEPs”, which among others calls for a greater emphasis on demand-side policies, a focus on gender and youth, policy implementation

mechanisms, the impact of future of work transitions, as well as – more recently – the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

The great majority of countries that completed the IPAD2019 questionnaire have already adopted national employment policies, as shown in the table below:

National employment policies				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have adopted NEP	Involvement of employers in the design of NEPs	Involvement of workers in the design of NEPs	Involvement of the ILO in the design of NEPs
49	37	30	27	38

Many of the currently active NEPs were adopted prior to the 14th African Regional Meeting, but in many instances the existing policies have been revised recently. The fact that almost all African countries have either developed NEPs, or are in the process of doing so, ⁶ demonstrates the centrality of employment in national development strategies. It is encouraging to note that employers’ and workers’ organizations are generally closely associated with the design of NEPs, including those currently under preparation in nine African countries. ILO field offices, technical specialists and headquarter units are often involved in the formulation of NEPs, or in preparatory work such as gap analyses and labour market studies. The formulation of NEPs is covered by the training modules offered by at least one of the labour administration centres (CRADAT). What is missing, however, are information and data on the impact of NEPs on employment and decent work in Africa.

1.4. Promotion of youth employment

The IPAD2019 points out that Africa’s employment challenge affects all population groups, but young women and men are the hardest hit. The IPAD2019 therefore calls for a focus on youth employment, to be addressed through a

⁶ The following countries reported that they were in the process of developing a NEP, or were planning to do so in the near future: Comoros, Egypt, Eswatini, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritius, South Africa, South Sudan and Zimbabwe. The NEPs formulated by the governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Gambia were awaiting approval, and are not included in the table above.

comprehensive pro-employment approach. This means that African youth employment strategies must focus on the demand side of the labour market, by creating new opportunities for decent wage employment in the public and the private spheres, and improving the environment for individual or collective self-employment. They must be complemented by appropriate labour market policies to match supply to demand.

In more general terms, the ILO recommends the adoption of a comprehensive, rights-based approach to creating productive and decent employment for young people. Those frameworks must simultaneously promote pro-employment, gender-sensitive programmes economic policies, sound educational and training systems, for a smooth school-to-work transition, as well as measures to ensure that young people have access to social protection, and a voice in decisions that affect them. Convention No. 122 (see section 1.2) is particularly relevant in this context, since the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) in placing special emphasis on youth employment when supervising the application of Convention No. 122.

The great majority of ILO Member States in Africa consider youth employment as a top priority, not least because high rates of youth employment entail the risk of political instability.

Youth employment initiatives				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries with youth employment initiatives	Involvement of employers in those initiatives	Involvement of workers in those initiatives	Involvement of the ILO in those initiatives
49	42	27	22	32

Member States report a broad variety of initiatives to promote youth employment, such as the setting up of dedicated ministries or authorities for youth affairs, the formulation of youth employment policies or strategies, better access to finance through special banks or financial institutions, skills training and apprenticeship programmes, setting preferential employment targets for youth in public procurement, as well as the implementation of specific, youth-employment projects funded by development partners. As shown in the table above, the social partners are often, but not always involved in the design and implementation of youth employment initiatives, whereas the ILO often supports such initiatives through development cooperation (DC) projects and programmes. The Employment- Intensive Investment (EIIP) programmes in many African countries are a case in point.

The labour administration centres ARLAC and CRADAT have included the promotion of youth employment into their programmes for 2021–22, whereas the RECs support the promotion of youth employment through regional economic integration, the free movement of labour and through mutual skills recognition.

At the continental level, the AUC, in collaboration with the ITU and the ILO, has designed a programme that shall boost decent jobs for youth and enhance skills for youth in Africa’s digital economy; whereas Business Africa has developed a programme for youth and women, focusing on the future of work, entrepreneurship, skills development, and labour migration launched. The ILO has carried out thematic evaluations on selected areas related to youth employment, with the aim of developing an ILO regional strategy on youth employment, to be completed soon.

► The promotion of youth employment – an example from Côte d’Ivoire

The third component of the National Employment Policy of Côte d’Ivoire 2016–20 focuses on youth employment entirely, in particular through skills development and entrepreneurship promotion. A preliminary evaluation of this component revealed that the country has opened 201 youth employment counters, has trained 131,549 youths in employment-related subjects, and has supported 63,725 through youth employment projects. Moreover, Côte d’Ivoire has established a dedicated Youth Employment Agency.

1.5. Integrating Entrepreneurship education into national education systems

With many young women and men unable to secure formal employment opportunities as they make the transition from education to the world of work, encouraging entrepreneurship is an ever more important way of developing an entrepreneurial mindset of young people as well as

Integrating entrepreneurship into national education systems – the case of Mauritius

In Mauritius, entrepreneurship education has been introduced as “Business and Entrepreneurship Education” (BEE), in primary education at the level of grades 7 to 9 (for children aged 12 to 14 years old). Entrepreneurship education is also taught at the “O” level with a view to developing entrepreneurial skills. Employers’ and workers’ organizations, as well as various relevant government authorities, are closely involved in the design of the corresponding curricula.

building their abilities and competencies to pursue self-employment and enterprise opportunities in labour markets where formal employment opportunities are scarce.

In most African countries, micro, small and medium-sized businesses, established through entrepreneurship, are the main drivers of job creation. Entrepreneurship strengthens economic growth and can play a crucial role in spurring sustainable development and generating decent jobs, thereby contributing directly to SDG 8 (economic growth and decent work). Entrepreneurship education, therefore, is essential in raising awareness about business among young women and men. In support of this objective the ILO has developed its “Know about business” (KAB) entrepreneurship education programme which seeks to introduce young women and men to the world of business and entrepreneurship. Consequently, the IPAD2019 calls for

55.1%

the integration of entrepreneurship education into national education systems in Africa. The results are mixed since relatively few countries have achieved this goal so far:

Entrepreneurship education in national education				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have integrated entrepreneurship in education systems	Involvement of employers in those efforts	Involvement of workers in those efforts	Involvement of the ILO in those efforts
49	27	14	8	18

While the number of countries that responded “yes” to the underlying question is relatively low at present, many more reported that they had elaborated advanced plans to integrate entrepreneurship education into the national education system. In the majority of cases, entrepreneurship education is being integrated into the curricula of tertiary institutions, such as universities and/or vocational training centres, sometimes involving internships in actual enterprises. In Rwanda, all students, regardless of their major course of study, are required to take classes in entrepreneurship during all three years of secondary school. In some countries, such as Kenya and Rwanda, entrepreneurship studies have been introduced even at early childhood level. Not surprisingly, employers’ organizations are more involved in these efforts than trade unions. The Office provides support through its KAB, Start and Improve your Business (SIYB) and Expand your Business (EYB) programmes. Both ARLAC and CRADAT have integrated entrepreneurship in some of their training curricula. To date, entrepreneurship education programmes supported by the ILO and inspired from KAB, are being used in Botswana, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe as a tool for the teaching of entrepreneurship in national education systems.

1.6. Social and solidarity economy

While a universal definition of the term “social and solidarity economy” (SSE) has yet to be agreed upon, a major, tripartite conference organized by the ILO in 2009 in Johannesburg defined the SSE as follows:

“the social economy is a concept designating enterprises and organizations, in particular cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, associations, foundations and social enterprises, which have the specific feature of producing goods, services and knowledge while pursuing both economic and social aims and fostering solidarity”

(ILO, 2009)

61.2%

The ILO has been involved in the promotion of cooperatives, one of the principal components of the SSE, since 1920, and has been embracing the wider SSE for the past 15 years. A wide range of tools and materials on SSE and cooperative promotion has been developed by the ILO. SSE organizations and enterprises exist in all African countries

and they are recognised as a vital strategy to the post-COVID-19 rebuild. It is for this reason that the promotion of the SSE has been included into the IPAD2019. The results are as follows:

Promotion of self-employment through SSE				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that run SSE promotion programmes	Involvement of employers in such programmes	Involvement of workers in such programmes	Involvement of the ILO in such programmes
49	30	15	15	25

In many instances, SSE/cooperative promotion activities are included in broader development programmes, for instance in local/rural development schemes, in women and youth entrepreneurship programmes, or in efforts to formalize the informal economy. Governments have taken measures at the macro level, for example through the adoption of SSE laws (Cabo Verde, Djibouti, Cameroon, Mali, Senegal and Tunisia) or SSE policies (South Africa), the establishment of related institutions, the provision of financial support to nascent SSE organizations, as well as capacity-building programmes for SSE members, leaders and promoters. Some employers' organizations support the SSE as being part of the private sector, while trade unions see SSE as an instrument to reduce decent work deficits in the informal economy. Numerous ILO projects and programmes support the development of the SSE in Africa; this includes three projects in Tunisia (namely PAJESS, JEUN'ESS and FORTER'ESS), as well as elements of the ProAgro project in Ethiopia and Morocco, the PROSPECTS project in Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya and Uganda, and the CLEAR project in Burkina Faso and in Mali. The labour administration centres are currently not involved in the promotion of the SSE, nor are the Regional Economic Commissions.⁷ The African Union Commission is developing an SSE policy document which is supported by the ILO under the AU-ILO Joint Operational Programme. The SSE Strategy will be presented at the 4th Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment to be held in Eswatini towards the end of 2021, in the run-up to the General Discussion on "Decent Work and the Social and Solidarity Economy" at the 110th Session of the ILC (2022).

Promotion of the Social and Solidarity Economy in South Africa

The South African government considers the SSE as an important element of economic development and a promising avenue for job creation, and is currently developing a comprehensive national SSE policy. The country has a Co-operatives Act, and deliberate effort was made to include co-operatives into emergency procurement and support initiatives following the onset of COVID-19. Discussions are also underway to implement a public employment programme that stimulates social and solidarity economy activity in communities.

1.7. Implementation of employment-intensive investment programmes

The Employment-Intensive Investment Programme in Madagascar

The EII approach has been applied in Madagascar for over 30 years, initially through the implementation of a large scale rehabilitation and reconstruction programme in the aftermath of several destructive cyclones on the East and South coasts of Madagascar, followed by a labour-based road rehabilitation and maintenance demonstration project in the Antsirabe Region and a series of rural and urban projects using the EII approach. These projects, which involve several UN agencies, continue till today, and have generated millions of work-days for unemployed persons.

Employment-intensive investments (EII) harness infrastructure development for employment creation, poverty reduction and local economic and social development. Such investments use local labour and local resources, thereby creating much needed employment and income, reducing costs, saving foreign currency, and supporting local industry while increasing the capacity of local institutions. The combination of local participation in planning with the utilization of locally available skills, appropriate technology, materials and work methods has proven to be an effective and economically viable approach to infrastructure works and jobs creation in many countries. Over the last ten years, the ILO's employment-intensive investment programme has implemented development cooperation projects with a volume of approximately US\$300 million worldwide,

65.3%

including many African countries. The EIIP approach features prominently in the Employment and Decent Work for

⁷ However, it should be noted that the "Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa" (OHADA), which covers 16, mostly French-speaking African countries, has adopted in 2010 a **uniform act on cooperatives**, which is now applicable in all Member States.

Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205), and in the ILO flagship programme “Jobs for Peace and Resilience”.

It seems, however, that the relevant question ⁸ in the questionnaire was misunderstood by some respondents; some considered it under the aspect of (general) investment facilitation, and others under the aspect of public-private partnerships. The table below may therefore not capture all EII programmes in Africa:

Implementation of EII programmes				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that run EII programmes	Involvement of employers in such programmes	Involvement of workers in such programmes	Involvement of the ILO in such programmes
49	32	14	13	21

Traditionally, EII programmes have been used to improve local infrastructure, such as rural roads, irrigation schemes, or public buildings such as schools and hospitals. In recent years, the approach has also been applied in other projects, such as the East Africa Crude Oil Pipeline, the Nyerere Hydro-Electric Power Project and the Standard Gauge Railways in the United Republic of Tanzania, the construction of food-processing plants in Zimbabwe, climate proofing of cyclone-damaged public buildings in Mozambique, the implementation of an optical fibre networks, or the manufacturing of protective masks as part of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in the Central African Republic. Some countries, such as Côte d’Ivoire, use the EII concept to enhance the employment-creation intensity of sectoral policies and investment programmes while others, such as Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, South Africa and Zambia have incorporated EII into public procurement regulations. Some governments promote EII through fiscal measures while others promote them within the framework of social assistance programmes, such as the establishment of a national social protection floor. Employers are generally supportive of the EII approach while some trade unions express reservations, claiming that the jobs created through EII are temporary and of low quality. This is mainly a result of relating EIIP to infrastructure works only, which by its nature creates short-term employment. The Office supports EII through project design, resource mobilization, technical assistance, impact assistance and the production of tools. EII is covered by ARLAC’s basic labour market course; the RECs have not yet designed cross-border employment intensive programmes.

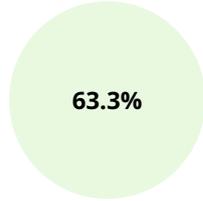
Within the framework of the ILO-AUC joint operation programme 2021–2023, the ILO provides technical support and capacity-building to enhance the [Job Creation Toolkit](#) developed by the Programme for Infrastructure Development In Africa (PIDA), with the aim of maximizing learning and business opportunities in the delivery of PIDA infrastructure projects. Moreover, phase II of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) includes a protocol on Investment, whereas the AUC facilitated the conclusion of the Pan African Investment Code, designed to facilitate cross border investments.

1.8. Productivity enhancement

Productivity enhancement – an example from Egypt

The ILO SCORE programme has been operational in Egypt since 2018. Thirty factories in Egypt participated in the programme, which provides training and advice on topics such as workplace cooperation, clean production and quality assurance. The programme combines practical classroom-based training with on-site consultancy by industry experts. These follow-up consultations ensure that the training is put into practice in the workplace. Thanks to the programme, 90 per cent of participating enterprises reported cost savings, 57 per cent saw an increase in their productivity, and 83 per cent registered a decrease in the percentage of defective products. Moreover, 80 per cent of companies received fewer workers’ complaints.

Raising productivity – and ensuring that the productivity gains are equitably shared between business owners and investors (higher profits and shareholder value) and workers (higher wages and better working conditions) – is of critical importance in efforts to reduce poverty. The virtuous circle of productivity, employment and development can be fuelled through the re-investment of productivity gains into product and process innovations, plant and equipment improvements, and measures to enhance the skills and improve the work environment of the workforce. Governments, workers and employers are united in their pursuit of enhanced productivity because greater productivity is the primary source of improvements in living standards, the most sustainable route out of working poverty, and the basis (and measure) of competitiveness in global markets. It is for this reason that the IPAD2019 included a topic on “enhancing productivity through improving the business environment, promoting sustainable product and process innovations,



⁸ Does the government promote public and private employment-intensive investments at a large scale, including in non-infrastructure works and services?

plant and equipment improvements, and appropriate technology". This recommendation has been implemented by several African countries:

Productivity enhancement initiatives				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have adopted productivity enhancement initiatives	Involvement of employers in such initiatives	Involvement of workers in such initiatives	Involvement of the ILO in such initiatives
49	31	14	9	15

The measures taken by governments to enhance productivity cover a wide range of topics; some have supplied or leased machinery (Ethiopia, Madagascar, Sierra Leone), some have invested in digital transformation (Burkina Faso, Comoros, Ghana, Mauritius), others have adopted policies to improve the business environment (Burundi, Eswatini, Gambia, Mali), and yet others have carried out studies to simulate the impact of macro and sectoral policies on productivity (Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon). The African employers' and workers' organizations are generally in favour of productivity-enhancing measures, but, as the table above suggests, are not always fully involved in such initiatives. The Office supports productivity growth through skills development programmes, strengthening of labour market institutions, social dialogue mechanisms and through dedicated projects and programmes such as "SCORE" (sustaining competitive and responsible enterprises), which is being implemented in Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mauritius, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia and Zimbabwe and "Better Work" (improving working conditions and competitiveness in the garment industry, one of ILO's five flagship programmes). The ILO Cooperative Programme promotes productivity enhancement through improved work organization and economies of scale in both agriculture and non-agricultural occupations. The RECs have not initiated productivity programmes per se, but productivity concerns have been incorporated into regional decent work programmes and/or regional economic integration programmes. The African Union, the Pan-African Productivity Association (PAPA) and the ILO have agreed to collaborate on knowledge sharing on experience in implementing productivity interventions, to strengthen national productivity centres, to implement productivity eco-systems interventions in selected countries and develop a Productivity Index for Africa.

1.9. Active labour market policies

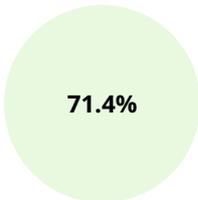
Active labour market policies (ALMPs) – an example from Togo

Togo has set up a comprehensive ALMP infrastructure, consisting of:

- ▶ Employability programmes.
- ▶ Entrepreneurship promotion programmes for young artisans.
- ▶ Support project for group-based economic activities.
- ▶ National project for the promotion of rural entrepreneurship.
- ▶ Support Fund for Youth Economic Initiatives.
- ▶ National Fund for Apprenticeship, Training and Professional Development.
- ▶ National Fund for Inclusive Finance.
- ▶ National Agency for the Promotion and Guarantee of SME/SMI Financing.
- ▶ Measures to improve the business climate (tax code, investment code, one-stop shop for business creation, etc.).

In addition, Togo has a public employment service which is responsible for the recruitment, placement, orientation and training of job seekers.

The primary goal of active labour market policies (ALMPs)⁹ is to improve the matching of jobs (vacancies) and jobseekers and create job opportunities through subsidies and public employment programmes, along with improving the employability of workers. In so doing, ALMPs can contribute to employment and economic growth and reduce unemployment as rapidly as possible and with the best possible job match, by providing jobseekers with the support they need to successfully re-enter the labour market. ALMPs are usually targeted at specific groups facing particular labour market integration difficulties: younger and older people, demobilized soldiers and those particularly hard to place, as well as those who are far away from the labour market such as people with disabilities, the youth neither in employment, education or training (NEET), and migrants. Active labour market policies may be classified into the following categories:



- ▶ employment intermediation services (job search assistance, information provision, counselling and matching);
- ▶ labour market training;
- ▶ subsidized employment (wage and hiring subsidies for retention subsidies);

⁹ *Passive* labour market policies are, in contrast, those that are concerned with providing replacement income during periods of joblessness or job search, such as unemployment insurance or social transfers.

- ▶ entrepreneurship and self-employment; and
- ▶ Public works and public employment programmes.

ALMPs are of great importance to the African labour markets, and hence the IPAD2019 recommended to support the design and implementation of active labour market policies and employment services. This has happened in numerous countries:

Active labour market programmes				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have adopted ALMPs	Involvement of employers in such programmes	Involvement of workers in such programmes	Involvement of the ILO in such programmes
49	35	19	8	14

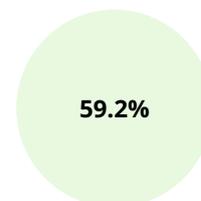
The relatively high number of affirmative responses is due to the fact that public employment services, which constitute one of the four ALMP categories, exist in most countries of the continent. However, it should be noted that most of these employment services were put in place long before the adoption of the IPAD2019, and can therefore not be considered as a result of the IPAD2019. Most countries on the continent have adopted additional measures falling under the remaining three ALMP categories (labour market training, subsidized employment, entrepreneurship), which have been reported under the relevant sections of this report. A growing number of countries have established special employment agencies for young people, who face the greatest difficulties in finding a job. Employers' and workers' organizations are generally supportive of ALMPs, but their involvement seem limited, as shown in the table above. The Office possesses expertise in all four ALMP categories, and implements numerous projects related to them. CRADAT has set up a training programme aimed at harmonizing labour market policies in the public employment services in its member States.

2. Improved skills and technology

In most African countries, the responsibility for skills training and technology promotion does not lie with the Ministry of Labour, but with the ministries and authorities responsible for technical and vocational education and training (TVET). In most cases the IPAD2019 questionnaires were completed by the Ministries of Labour and, as such, the responses may not provide a complete and comprehensive picture of the skills systems context in the countries.

2.1. Skills and lifelong learning policies

Skills development is key to address the opportunities and challenges in changing economies that arise, among others, from the adoption of new technologies, the transition to low carbon economic activities, migration, demographics and the integration of international trading, ultimately leading to a rapidly evolving future of work. Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is an indispensable means, especially for young people, to acquire the relevant skills for decent work opportunities. Lifelong contributes to keep abreast with the changing labour market skills needs.



▶ Skills policies – Democratic Republic of the Congo

The governance of the skills systems in DRC was fragmented. The ILO assisted the government in the establishment of a Committee to serve as a monitoring body of national actions to ensure proper budget allocation for initiatives related to employment and skills development aiming at improving youth access to decent employment. In addition, to further improve the governance of the skills system, the ILO is currently supporting the development of a National Skills Policy.

Governments, workers' and employers' organizations on the continent are cooperating to improve the employability of workers, move young people into productive employment and decent work, and to increase the productivity of enterprises through high-quality skills development. National policies foster and reinforce the development and use of skills.

The ILO conducts research and provides technical assistance addressing diverse technical issues at different stages of the policy cycle to support constituents to develop, monitor, evaluate and review skills policies and to integrate skills development into national and sector-specific development strategies. The Office's work on skills development and lifelong learning has in recent years focused primarily on four areas:

- ▶ Linking training and learning to current labour market needs by supporting forward-looking skills development through industry-driven skills anticipation and matching.
- ▶ Making lifelong learning a reality through effective policies and institutions.
- ▶ Developing skills for inclusive and diverse labour markets by expanding access to: learning and career transition support; employment-related training in rural communities and increased opportunities for women and men to work in the formal economy.
- ▶ Promoting work-based learning and building quality apprenticeship systems that encourage better utilization of skills and facilitate access to employment opportunities, particularly for the youth.

The IPAD2019 highlights the importance of strengthening the supply side of the labour market through the establishment of inclusive skills ecosystems which recognize that education, training and lifelong learning and are fundamental elements of national policies designed to create decent and productive employment. This challenge is being met by several African countries:

Skills and lifelong learning				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have undertaken related activities	Involvement of employers in such activities	Involvement of workers in such activities	Involvement of the ILO in such activities
49	29	15	8	11

In the majority of cases, governments, often with the support of employers' and workers' organizations, have formulated national skills development strategies (Algeria, Central African Republic, Djibouti, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Mali, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda, Zambia and others); some have established related agencies or funds (Burkina Faso, Madagascar), Kenya has supplied modern pedagogic equipment to vocational training institutions, Côte d'Ivoire has undertaken sectoral studies to assess skills requirements relating to digitization and green jobs, and Cabo Verde as well as the Democratic Republic of the Congo has put in place a system for skills recognition. A growing number of African governments recognize the importance of practical apprenticeships and internships (including those in the informal economy), and have adopted programmes to that effect (Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, South Africa, among others). The employers, to some extent more than the workers, are often associated with the design and

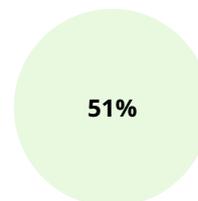
monitoring of skills development programmes and institutions. The regional labour administration centres are, to some extent, vocational training institutions themselves.

2.2. Increased investment in skills development

▶ Advocating for increased investments in skills development – SADC

Training funds are a growing popular approach to mobilize funding for skills development. These dedicated funds, usually outside normal government budgetary channels, can be financed by employer levies, public subsidies or donor financing. In many SADC countries however, such training funds lack clearly articulated objectives; this is an area where ILO advisory services can be helpful.

A well-skilled workforce has the potential of driving economic and social change by generating innovations, attracting investments and promoting diversification. Skills development plays a fundamental role in the development of a qualified workforce and in increasing the skills of workers through lifelong learning.



The SDG 4, that is, “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, cannot be achieved without a net increase in budgetary allocations and/or official development assistance allocated to skills programmes. This relates in particular to SDG target

4.4 (“by 2030, increase by x% the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship”), and to outcome 5 of the ILO’s Programme and Budget for 2020–21. Hence, the IPAD2019 called for greater attention to skills development, and the IPAD2019 review questionnaire posed the question: “has the government increased investment in skills development? If so, please quantify the increase in absolute figures or in terms of investment per person.” Many constituents did not answer this question at all, while those who did could not provide evidence of a real increase in investments in skills development.¹⁰ Hence, the progress made in respect of increased investments in skill is rather meagre:

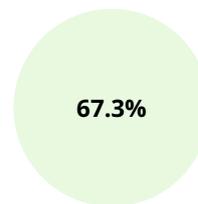
Investment increase in skills and lifelong learning				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that responded to the question (with or without data)	Involvement of employers	Involvement of workers	Involvement of the ILO
49	25	11	5	9

In answering this question, most countries referred to existing skills development programmes, strategies and institutions, without however indicating whether financial allocations to these institutions had increased, and when. Benin reported that in the future, 70 per cent of vocational training modules would focus on technical issues compared to 30 per cent earmarked for subjects of general nature. The Rwandese Government has increased its investment in the education sector from 125.7 billion Rwandan franc (FRWA) (US\$138.9 million) in 2018–19 to FRWA310.9 billion (US\$315.6 million) in 2020–21, while Uganda’s education-related expenditures in percentage of GDP increased from 1.7 per cent in 2010 to 2.2 per cent in 2019. Several countries were planning to launch studies on skills requirements of the labour markets, which could eventually lead to greater investments into skills. In Rwanda, South Africa reported the introduction of a bursary scheme for workplace-based learning, which, by March 2021, had supported 15,000 apprentices. The patchy participation of employers’ and workers’ organizations, as well as ILO offices, is not surprising, since the authority to increased investments in skills lies with governments. Social partners may lobby for such increases through social dialogue channels, but the final decision will be taken by government and parliament. In this context, several countries stressed that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic had severely constrained their fiscal margin.

¹⁰ With the exception of Mauritius, Senegal and South Africa, from where such figures were available.

2.3. Reducing skills mismatches

Matching the supply to the demand of skills is part of a short and medium term approach to react to the continuous evolution of technologies and their impacts on the labour market. Achieving this goal requires policies and institutions that support better forecasting and better matching of



▶ LMIS – how it works in Botswana (new text)

Botswana has produced an LMIS Masterplan which comprises an official list of indicators (description, formula, data source, disaggregation and interpretation of each indicator) for the country. Botswana’s Human Resource Development Council launched the official handbook for the country’s Labour Market Indicators Platform on the 21st September 2021. The key indicators of Botswana’s labour market are available on the [relevant page](#) of the country’s statistics office.

the available skills to labour market needs.

The ILO contributes to building the skills anticipation capacity of governments and social partners. Skills anticipation is a process that allows the identification of future skills needs and better prepares countries to meet these needs. It enables individuals, training institutions, policy-makers, employers and workers to make better decisions about education and training and the mechanisms that support them. This leads to improved skills systems that contributes to strengthen the labour force and is an important key to economic development. Labour Market Information Systems (LMIS) can contribute to reducing such mismatches. LMIS provide an essential basis for employment and labour policies, and

inform the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies that are better focused and targeted. LMIS also contribute to a reduction in the transaction costs of labour markets as they help overcome incomplete information of labour market agents. It is important to establish institutional arrangements in order to make the information and analysis produced by LMIS widely available, and to provide opportunities for labour market stakeholders (primarily the social partners) to influence the agenda of the LMIS. The IPAD2019 therefore insisted that “skills programmes and skills institutions must be informed by effective labour market information systems to align skills offer to demand; and anticipate skills needs in a rapidly changing world of work”. This is happening in an increasing number of countries:

Reducing skills mismatches through LMIS				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have undertaken related activities	Involvement of employers in such activities	Involvement of workers in such activities	Involvement of the ILO in such activities
49	33	20	14	20

Not all the countries in the table above have established fully-fledged LMIS; some, such as Zambia, have carried out skills supply-and-demand surveys or similar studies. Rwanda publishes labour force surveys on a quarterly basis. Sao Tome and Principe has established a [digital platform](#) to match supply and demand on the labour market. Several countries, including Burundi, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Morocco, have set up National Employment Observatories, while Zimbabwe has established a National Manpower Advisory Council. Several countries, such as Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Uganda, reported that they wish to establish LMIS in the near future. Burkina Faso has elaborated a Charter for a Public-Private Partnership on Vocational Training, which involves government, the social partners and civil society. Not only are the employers naturally very keen to reduce skills mismatches on the labour market, the workers pursue this goal as well, since it could contribute to solving the unemployment problem. ARLAC offers a course on LMIS under its module on labour administration.

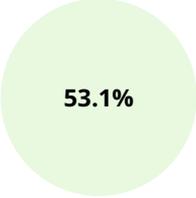
2.4. Apprenticeships and work-based learning

Work-based learning (WBL) refers to all forms of learning that takes place in a real work environment. Apprenticeships (formal and informal), internships/traineeships and on-the-job training are the most common types of work-based learning. These types usually – but not always – combine elements of learning in the workplace with classroom-based learning (an approach known as dual education). It demands close collaboration between social partners, enterprises, public authorities and TVET institutions. Countries around the world, at all levels of development, are putting WBL,

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) In Kenya

The RPL policy framework and implementation guidelines have been validated on a national scale in Kenya – through a workshop attended by tripartite constituents. These policies and guidelines identify, assess and certify a candidate’s knowledge, skills and competencies acquired in non-formal or informal settings, as well provide a framework for qualification awarding institutes to recognize prior experience. This was a result of the ILO advocating for the inclusion of skill recognition for young people and refugees in informal and vulnerable settings who were disproportionately impacted by the global pandemic.

particularly apprenticeships high on their policy agenda, recognizing its potential for reducing skills mismatch, meeting skills demand of a fast changing labour market, providing cost-effective training, promoting private sector development and smoothing transitions to the world of work. The ILO, in support to its constituents has launched the Quality Apprenticeships guide, a standard based on social dialogue, and public-private partnerships for apprenticeship training that can improve employment prospects for youth, through the development of skills identified by employers as necessary for growth and increased productivity.



WBL may include a process of “Recognition of Prior Learning” (RPL), which enables individuals without formal professional certificates to acquire a qualification that matches their knowledge and skills, including those

acquired in the informal economy, and thereby contribute to improving their employability, mobility, lifelong learning, social inclusion and self-esteem.

For these reasons, the IPAD2019 called for the design and delivery of flexible learning options that respond to changing labour market needs, and facilitate the recognition of training delivered by government agencies and the private sector through flexible qualification and skills recognition systems, including apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships and work-based learning				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have introduced WBL and/or apprenticeships	Involvement of employers in those schemes	Involvement of workers in those schemes	Involvement of the ILO in those schemes
49	26	16	8	9

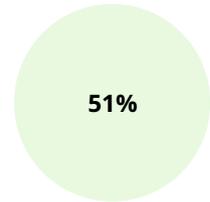
From the IPAD2019 questionnaires it appears that an increasing number of African countries are introducing various forms of WBL and apprenticeships. Madagascar, for example, combines apprenticeships with entrepreneurship education. Malawi implements a Global Programme on Skills and Lifelong Learning’ (GPSL3) project, which seeks to improve the responsiveness of skills systems to current and future labour market needs. Senegal has set up training enterprises (“écoles entreprises”) which dispense a form of dual education. Zambia promotes WBL in general while Kenya has adopted “Fundamental Competency-based Education Training Standards”. Benin has established a Fund for the development of continuous professional education and apprenticeships, which finances vocational training activities in the private sector and informal economy. In Namibia, employers have joined hands with the Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN) to promote the uptake of graduates into businesses as apprentices and/or interns thereby giving them crucial first time work experience. South Africa has set up 26 Centres of Specialization (COS) dedicated to training artisans in 13 priority trades. The COS Programme is an indirect response to the need to revamp South Africa’s apprenticeship training system which had been in decline since the mid-1980’s.

In many instances, employers’ organizations cooperate closely with such schemes because apprenticeships necessarily require support from private enterprises. Trade union involvement is less widespread, and only a few countries receive Office assistance in introducing WBL.

The subject of apprenticeship will receive particular attention within the ILO since the 110th and the 111th Sessions of the International Labour Conference (2022 and 2023) include on their agenda a standard-setting item on apprenticeships.

2.5. Promotion of modern technology

Technology, innovation and transformation are closely related to the “Future of Work” debate; the report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work underlined that “advances in technology are not only expanding choices about where and when to work, but are also creating new and better jobs. Lowering our carbon footprint offers tremendous opportunities to improve economic



Modern technologies – an example from Zambia

The Government of Zambia supports the use of modern technology through three sets of measures:

- ▶ Different types of short-term credits enable business associations to undertake bulk purchases of inputs, thereby realizing important savings in input prices and procurement costs.
- ▶ The purchase of modern equipment for TVET institutions to enable them to spread modern technologies.
- ▶ The establishment of a credit guarantee scheme that serves as a channel to facilitate access of entrepreneurs to long term finance. The scheme aims to promote the growth and competitiveness of SMEs by facilitating access to finance.

development, generate employment opportunities and improve rural livelihoods. Ensuring that women can thrive in the workforce will unleash new potential and boost economic growth. With access to education, training and technologies, rural communities can transform themselves. If older people can remain active and engaged, they will enrich society and the economy through their skills and experience. Empowering young people to reach their full potential and access emerging opportunities will make them tomorrow’s agents of change.” Consequently, the IPAD2019 emphasized that “it is therefore indispensable to increase investments in technology and innovation, in particular digital technologies leveraging on the greatly improved internet and mobile telecommunication infrastructure on the African continent. The continent’s skills institutions should therefore pay much greater attention than hitherto on imparting information and communication technology skills, covering both hardware and software”. For the time being, however, relatively few African countries are engaged in the promotion of modern technologies, as shown in the table below:

Promotion of modern technologies				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that are promoting modern technologies	Involvement of employers in those efforts	Involvement of workers in those efforts	Involvement of the ILO in those efforts
49	25	9	3	2

In almost all cases, the promotional efforts are focusing on information and communication technologies (ICT), including internet connectivity. Countries such as Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea and many others are expanding the use of governmental e-services. Electronic payments via mobile phones, initially pioneered in 2007 in Kenya as “M-PESA”, is now available throughout the continent. Cabo Verde, Gambia, Mauritius and other countries have established technology hubs to spread innovation. Several countries have introduced e-learning facilities, not least to circumvent the restrictions required to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Burundi reports the installation of a fibre-optic cable while Kenya seeks to expand the 5G internet broadband technology. The ILO and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), with AU support have initiated the programme “Boosting Decent Jobs and Enhancing Skills for Youth in Africa’s Digital Economy”, which is operational in Côte d’Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and South Africa.

Many of these innovations require the cooperation from private sector entities; it is therefore surprising that, as per the questionnaire, so few employers’ organizations are involved in the promotion of modern technologies. The involvement of trade unions and of ILO offices seems marginal. The RECs are involved in the promotion of modern technologies; for example, the EAC adopted an ICT protocol which is being operationalized in its partner states whereas ECOWAS has concluded a MoU with the Malabo-based African Observatory on Science, Technology and Innovation (AOSTI). At the continental level, the African Union has launched the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 (STISA 2024).

3. Inclusive transformation for decent work in the informal and rural economy

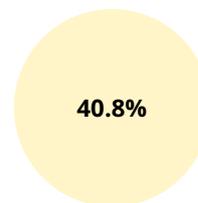
3.1. Formalization of the informal economy

Enterprise formalization – the Cameroonian approach

Cameroon has developed a roadmap towards formalization consisting of seven priority axes, namely: (1) registration of artisans and enterprises; (2) taxation; (3) access to social security; (4) access to finance; (5) enterprise development and productivity; (6) access to public and private markets; (7) awareness raising and access to information.

So far, a system for the decentralized registration of artisans and of entrepreneurs has been put in place. A nomenclature of crafts has been published in 2021, technical capacity-building programmes for registered artisans has been made available, and a decree issued in October 2019 determines the the nature and thresholds of contracts reserved for artisans, SMEs, grassroots community organisations and civil society organisations, i.e., informal economy operators.

From a decent work and sustainable development perspective, the most striking feature of African societies and economies is the sheer magnitude of the informal economy, which employs almost 90 per cent of the continent's persons in employment, contributes up to 65 per cent to the GDP in some countries, and hosts more than 90 per cent of the continent's micro and small enterprises. The informal economy manifests itself in a variety of forms across and within economies. Formalization processes and measures aiming to facilitate transitions to formality need to be tailored to specific circumstances faced by different countries and categories of economic units or workers. The informal economy is of greatest significance for domestic production, economic growth, as a source of employment and as an avenue for poverty reduction. On the other hand, informal economy actors suffer from sever decent work deficits: work in the informal economy is often characterized by small or undefined work places, unsafe and unhealthy working conditions, low levels of skills and productivity, low or irregular incomes, long working hours and lack of access



to information, markets, finance, training and technology. Workers in the informal economy are not recognized, registered, regulated or protected under labour legislation and social protection. Similarly, economic units in the informal economy are not legally recognized or registered; they often do not comply with relevant legal requirements, and do not benefit from the advantages those regulations may provide. Against this background, the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204), as well as Convention No. 122, are of highest relevance to the African region, and consequently, the formalization process is an important element of the IPAD2019. Unfortunately, relatively few countries have taken steps so far to initiate a formalization process:

Formalization of the informal economy				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have initiated formalization processes	Involvement of employers in those processes	Involvement of workers in those processes	Involvement of the ILO in those processes
49	20	14	15	19

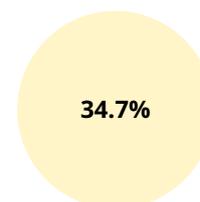
Several additional countries, including Mauritius, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe, have indicated that they are in the process of developing formalization strategies.

Several African countries have adopted policy reforms ranging from enterprise formalization, recognition of prior leaning among informal economy workers to extending social protection to informal workers or implementing specific programmes for promoting youth employment and their transition to formality. Cameroon and the United Republic of Tanzania prioritize enterprise formalization, including reforms for improving business environment, appropriate regulatory framework and access to credits. Ghana formalization strategy seeks to extend social protection to the informal economy, using social dialogue as a tool. Comoros and the United Republic of Tanzania have organized comprehensive informal economy surveys; Kenya, Nigeria and the Seychelles have established agencies providing support to micro and small enterprises, most of which operate in the informal economy. Namibia and South Africa have established tripartite task teams to deal with informality. Burundi has revised its Labour Code in 2020, extending its scope to the informal economy. The Government of Cabo Verde applies an integrated approach towards the formalization of small economic units. In addition to the special regime for Micro and Small Enterprises ("REMPE", see section 0), the simplified tax regime and the extension of social security coverage for small enterprises. Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire have designed strategies for the transition from the informal economy to formality. Several countries have taken measures to extend social protection to informal economy operators, others facilitate access to finance and markets, and yet others seek to promote organizations and associations of informal economy operators. However, many of these initiatives were taken *before* the adoption of the IPAD2019.

CRADAT and ARLAC are offering courses related to the informal economy. Several RECs have organized knowledge-sharing workshops on formalization strategies.

3.2. Policies and strategies for creating decent work in the rural economy

Agriculture remains the economic sector employing most people in Africa. It represented 50.5 per cent of total employment in 2020. Agriculture is the main sector for employment in eastern Africa, central Africa and western Africa, less so in southern Africa and in northern Africa. In 2019, close to 54 per cent of women worked in this sector compared to 49 per cent of men. These figures do not include non-agricultural employment in rural areas. It is estimated that 42 per cent of rural households in Africa operate a non-farm enterprise, contributing between 8 per cent (Malawi) and 36 per cent (Niger) of average household income. Most of these enterprises are informal, operate only seasonally, and create few jobs,¹¹ but some are highly sophisticated commercial agribusinesses supplying global markets through intense regional and national linkages with industry and services.



The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the decent work challenges facing rural areas. Common challenges to unleashing the potential of rural areas include low productivity; underinvestment in agriculture and non-farm rural employment; lack of adequate infrastructure; poor social protection coverage, a high degree of informality, poor occupational safety and health and working conditions; and limited or no access to services, including financial services. Poverty is mainly a rural phenomenon, and working poverty prevails, as incomes from agriculture are low and activities consist mainly of subsistence farming by smallholders. Rural workers are often vulnerable, and in numerous circumstances, are not fully covered by national labour law, while more broadly, their rights are often not realized or enforced. The voice of rural workers is often not heard in relation to both rural development and broader economic and social development. Additional pressures in rural economies result from conflict, natural resource depletion and climate change. This notwithstanding, the rural economy holds considerable potential for economic growth, employment creation and promotion of decent work if the right policies are in place. In fact, revitalizing rural economies and making rural areas more attractive to young people and ensuring that decent rural employment opportunities are a reality will be essential to building an inclusive, resilient and sustainable recovery of rural economies that leaves no one behind. Recognizing the importance of rural employment for African labour markets, the IPAD2019 called for the design of rural employment strategies that prioritize productivity growth and economic diversification. It appears, however, that this call yielded limited response only:

Policies and strategies for creating decent work in the rural economy				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have designed rural employment strategies	Involvement of employers in the design processes	Involvement of workers in the design processes	Involvement of the ILO in the design processes
49	18	11	7	4

In most instances, governments did not formulate dedicated rural employment strategies, but included the objective under broader strategies, such as national development plans or national employment policies. Comoros developed a strategy on the “blue (ocean-based) economy”, which includes rural components. Ghana is implementing the “planting for food and jobs” and the “one village – one dam” pilot schemes. United Republic of Tanzania’s Social Action Fund aims at creating sustainable livelihoods by supporting communities in developing and maintaining rural infrastructures such as earth-dams and irrigation schemes. The country has also adopted a community-based rural road maintenance strategy that was developed with ILO support. Under its COVID-19 response programme, Kenya has disbursed US\$30 million to support 200,000 smallholder farmers to enter into agribusiness. Burundi and Madagascar seek to strengthen rural cooperatives as a means to promote rural employment whereas Ethiopia has designed a rural jobs strategy and a rural employment generation scheme. In Madagascar, the operationalization of the National Action Plan for decent work in rural areas has advanced with support from the Government of Norway and IFAD. The continuous collaboration with IFAD in Madagascar is exemplary of the progress of the partnership for the promotion of decent work in the rural economy at national level with particular attention to rural youth. Employers’ organizations

Ghana – Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ)

PFJ is a flagship agricultural campaign of the Government of Ghana, launched by the President of the Republic in 2017. It comprises five Modules, namely: (i) food crops; (ii) planting for export and rural development; (iii) greenhouse technology villages; (iv) rearing for food and jobs; and (v) agricultural mechanization services. The programme shall address constraints such as low productivity, insufficient use of quality seeds and fertilizers, and weak market linkages. The programme seeks, inter alia, to increase job opportunities and reduce poverty through enhanced productivity. Between 2017 and mid-2020, the PFJ has created or strengthened some 2.6 million rural employment opportunities.

¹¹ Christiaensen, Luc; Demery, Lionel. 2018. Agriculture in Africa: Telling Myths from Facts. Directions in Development—Agriculture and Rural Development; Washington, DC: World Bank

are often involved in the design of such programmes, whereas the contributions of trade unions are more limited. The Office’s role in the design of rural employment strategies is marginal, although it could be argued that its participation in the formulation of broader frameworks, such as those included under work area 1, also cover rural areas.

Five of the six RECs that responded to the questionnaire report that they contribute to the implementation and dissemination of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of the African Union. The AUC supports member states and RECs in formulating their national and regional agriculture investment plans and in monitoring and tracking progress in the implementation of CAADP Malabo commitments. In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, the ILO has leveraged partnerships and comparative advantages with key international organizations. Examples include collaboration with IFAD on Country Strategic Opportunities Programmes in Africa, as well as joint work with FAO in Namibia on the promotion of decent work for women and youth smallholder farmers.

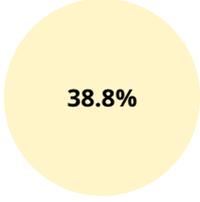
3.3. Green jobs and blue economy

The effects of climate change will alter the structure of employment; new jobs and new job families will emerge, others will disappear or become unsustainable, and enterprises must find ways to organize work and production differently. At least half of the global workforce – the equivalent of 1.5 billion people – will be affected by the transition to a greener economy. It is against this backdrop that the ILO has included a “Green Initiative” into the suite of seven Centenary Initiatives launched

REDD+ in Equatorial Guinea

REDD+ stands for ‘Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the Role of Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forests and Enhancement of Forest Carbon Stocks in Developing Countries’. In mid-2020, Equatorial Guinea has adopted a national investment plan 2020-2035 named ‘PINREDD+’ in which economic development and natural resource conservation are compatible objectives. Through this plan, Equatorial Guinea has committed to maintaining its forest cover at its 2014 level of 93 per cent of the territory, and to halving its forest degradation rate to 0.45 per cent.

by the Director-General in 2012. The objective of the Green Initiative is to equip the actors of the world of work with the understanding of the challenges and opportunities of the coming transition, and to help them take up the active role they must play in managing this change. It will further build the case that decent work approaches and social dialogue are indispensable for truly transformative change.



As part of the Green Initiative the ILO launched a [Green Jobs](#) programme that, through a holistic approach, provides leadership and technical advisory support for the promotion of socially inclusive development through the “greening” of enterprises, workplace practices and the labour market as a whole. These efforts create decent employment opportunities, enhance resource efficiency and build low-carbon, resilient and

sustainable societies. Green jobs are defined as “decent jobs that contribute to preserve or restore the environment”, be they in traditional sectors such as manufacturing and construction, or in new, emerging green sectors such as renewable energy and energy efficiency. Green jobs can be created in rural and urban areas in all countries, regardless of their level of economic development. The Green Jobs programme implements [several projects in Africa](#). Within the framework of the [Climate Action for Jobs Initiative](#),¹² the IPAD2019 called upon member States to, inter alia, to develop coherent policies and programmes for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies. The Climate Action for Jobs initiative was [launched in Africa](#) in April 2021 and is being implemented through the “Social Dimension of Ecological Transition” project in Côte d’Ivoire, Nigeria and Senegal with capacity development and knowledge-sharing activities in Algeria, Ghana, Morocco and Niger. The status of this commitment has been assessed through question 3.3 of the IPAD2019 questionnaire:

Design of green jobs strategies				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have designed green jobs strategies	Involvement of employers in the design processes	Involvement of workers in the design processes	Involvement of the ILO in the design processes
49	19	12	9	10

The relatively few countries that replied to the affirmative to this question referred to broader environmental protection or climate change related strategies (several of which were adopted prior to the Abidjan Declaration), only

¹² At the 2019 United Nations Climate Action Summit, 46 countries committed to place jobs at the heart of ambitious climate action and to promote a just transition. This [initiative](#) is spearheaded by the ILO and involves a wide range of partners (governments, social partners, private sector, academia, civil society). The initiative’s main goal is to foster synergies between climate action, the creation of decent jobs, and the pursuit of social justice.

two (Cameroon and Uganda) have so far formulated a specific green jobs strategy.¹³ Guinea has developed a climate change response programme, Senegal has established a Reforestation Agency, Madagascar has incorporated green jobs into the country's second DWCP, and Zimbabwe is drafting its Low Emissions Development Strategy and has integrated green jobs strategies into its national development plan. In May 2021, Mali has adopted complementary policies on climate change and renewable energy development, and Zimbabwe has assessed the employment implications of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Climate Change Agreement through full Green Jobs Assessment Models (GJAM). Nigeria has submitted an interim updated NDC to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), through which the country commits itself to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent by 2030. Côte d'Ivoire has revised its NDC with the support from the ILO and other partners. The social partners have been associated to a reasonable extent with these initiatives whereas the Office provides a considerable amount of assistance through national, regional and global programmes. In addition, the Office has carried out (or is carrying out) rapid [situational analyses](#) on the linkages between climate, environment and employment in a just transition perspective, in Côte d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Ghana, Madagascar, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe. SADC has developed a Regional Green Economy Strategy and Action Plan in 2015, while COMESA is implementing a Climate Change Programme, which includes Climate Smart Agriculture projects which aim at building resilience and optimizing crop production in response to climate change. The other RECs are contemplating the design of such strategies in the future.

The Blue Economy

The United Nations recognized, in its Resolution 71/312 adopted by the General Assembly on 6 July, 2017, the need to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development *inter alia* by improving the access to marine resources and markets for small-scale and artisanal fishers in developing countries, so as to improve their socioeconomic situation. Moreover, the Resolution called for the promotion of sustainable, ocean-based economies, which include fisheries, tourism, aquaculture, maritime transportation, renewable energy, marine biotechnology and seawater desalination, in particular for small island developing States and least developed countries. This is known as the "blue economy". The ILO considers that decent working and inclusive growth must prevail in the blue economy, and that healthier oceans and improved livelihoods of seafarers and fishers will ultimately create new jobs.

The ILO has adopted two important international labour standards for people who derive their living from the ocean: The Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), which is a comprehensive set of standards related to the living and working conditions of seafarers. The MLC, ratified by 98 Member States which together represent around 90 per cent of the world fleet by gross tonnage, provides the basis for the joint promotion of decent work by the shipping industry, seafarers' organizations and governments. The Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188), sets out standards governing conditions of work on fishing vessels, which provide employment to 38 million people, often working in dangerous circumstances and without sufficient protection. Ratification and implementation of these two standards in Africa are important for ensuring that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of these sectors in the region. This includes building capacity for inspection of national and foreign ships and fishing vessels operating in African waters.

In this context, the ILO has launched in 2019 a programme named "Development of the Blue Economy in African Island States: Decent Work, Prosperity, Sustainability". This programme shall contribute to a sustainable future of work and a just transition towards an inclusive low carbon Blue Economy which would comprise: (i) the sustainable harvesting of living resources; (ii) the generation of sustainable marine-based renewable energy; (iii) and sustainable tourism, commerce and trade in and around oceans. The programme will provide capacity-building, training and awareness raising of policy-makers, practitioners, stakeholders from the business community and labour representatives; it will further strengthen the dialogue between relevant state and non-state actors and the ILO constituents to ensure national Blue Economy strategies in selected African Island States are embedded in a tripartite process.

The development of a blue economy in African Island States still requires the design of blue economy strategy, the establishment of national institutional frameworks, as well as the reinforcement of national expertise in this field. To this effect, the ILO has organized short-term training programmes in Cabo Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritius and Senegal, and supports the setting up of a "Campus des Metiers de la Mer" (University for sea-related jobs) in collaboration with the Indian Ocean Commission.

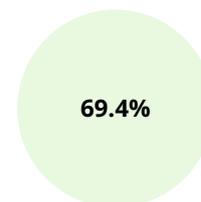
The two strands (green jobs and blue economy) are coming together in Equatorial Guinea, where the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the ILO and UNDP have launched a pilot project in 2021 to promote decent jobs in the green and blue economy. This project aims at strengthening the information system and entrepreneurship in the green and blue economies, and at promoting labour-intensive activities in forest management as well as coastal and maritime spatial management.

¹³ However, Cameroon's Green Jobs Promotion Programme was adopted as far back as 2017.

4. Sustainable enterprises

4.1. An enabling environment for sustainable enterprises

The concept of “sustainable enterprises” relates to the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental, that is, businesses that are economically viable, socially responsible and respectful of the environment. Such sustainable enterprises can flourish if a number of basic conditions are met: good governance and effective social dialogue; efficient civil and political institutions and processes; macroeconomic stability and sound management of the economy; a society and culture supportive of enterprise and of entrepreneurship; the existence of adequate physical infrastructure and information and communication technologies; the



► Creating a conducive environment for enterprises – the case of Cabo Verde

The Government of Cabo Verde has established “*Pró Empresa*” as an agency that seeks to improve the business ecosystem and to promote competitiveness and entrepreneurship through the provision of technical and financial Assistance. In addition, government has adopted “*REMPE*”, a special regime for Micro and Small Enterprises, which aims at promoting competitiveness, productivity, formalization and development of micro and small enterprises. Thirdly, the Government has introduced “*Monotributo*” as a simplified regime for the simplified payment and collection of taxes from small enterprises. Pioneered initially in South America, *Monotributo* has proven to be an effective tool for the formalization of micro and small enterprises, as well as for the extension of social security coverage.

availability of education, training and learning for a skilled workforce; rules and mechanisms that promote equity and economic and social inclusion; and business practices that reduce environmental damages and strive for a carbon-neutral economic activity.

Enterprises operate within a political, social and economic context and are subject to regulatory and institutional constraints. While it is important to support enterprise-specific interventions for businesses to grow, it is equally important to look at the external environment in which they operate. Without addressing the issues related to the overall business environment, interventions at the enterprise level alone do not produce optimal results to achieve sustainable development. To support the creation of a conducive climate for business development the Office has devised an assessment tool, named “Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises” (ESEE) which has been applied in a number of African countries. Paragraph 18 of the IPAD2019 calls for the effective implementation of the recommendations arising from ESEE and similar assessments. Progress in this area has been satisfactory:

Establishment of a conducive environment for sustainable enterprises

Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have introduced related reforms	Involvement of employers in designing reforms	Involvement of workers in designing reforms	Involvement of the ILO in designing reforms
49	34	14	8	13

Countries have taken a great variety of measures to improve the environment for sustainable enterprises; Burkina Faso, for example, has opened a Centre for the Formalization of Enterprises which registers 5,000 businesses per year. Similarly, several additional countries have established one-stop shops for business registration, and/or streamlined procedures to reduce the duration of the registration process to just one day. Guinea has adopted a wide range of fiscal, monetary and administrative reforms to ease entrepreneurial activities, while Mali and the Central African Republic have established joint public-private committees to analyse and improve the business environment. Botswana has amended the trade and industrial development acts so as to abolish the requirement for annual licensing, whereas Uganda has set up a National Productivity Steering Taskforce. Several countries have formulated national SME policies and established related agencies or, as in the case of South Africa, a Ministry of Small Business Development. In Mozambique, the Confederation of Business Association of Mozambique (CTA) has been assessing the environment for sustainable enterprises (ESEE); its report has been used to develop a three-year (2020–22) action agenda to pursue a structured lobbying and advocacy approach to influence policies, legislation and regulations towards creating an enabling environment sustainable enterprises.

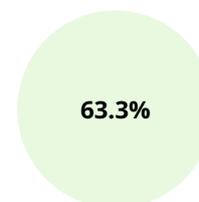
The table above indicates a relatively low level of participation of the social partners, as well as of ILO offices, in the design of such reforms, for reasons which need to be analysed. A notable exception is Ghana, where the LO and tripartite constituents have adopted recommendations on how to address barriers that hinder the creation and growth of sustainable enterprises, and established a Tripartite Coordination Mechanism (TCM) that will elaborate measures to improve the country’s business environment. All six RECs that completed the IPAD2019 questionnaire responded that they are involved in the dissemination and sharing of knowledge and best practices in creating an enabling business environment.

At the continental level, the AUC has been conducting stakeholder policy dialogues on trade policy-making, and elaborated guidelines for stakeholder dialogue engagement in Africa. In addition, the AUC holds private sectors

forums every year to facilitate dialogue and exchange of information between the private and public sectors. Phase 2 of the AfCFTA (whose negotiations are to be concluded by 31 December 2021) covers competition policy and investment regimes as elements of a favourable business environment. The joint ILO-AUC operational work includes a work stream on sustainable enterprises which aims at promoting an enabling environment, productivity and social enterprises.

4.2. Establishment of SME agencies

The centrality of enterprises for the Decent Work Agenda is underlined by the fact they are the subject of one of ILO’s seven centenary initiatives, namely the “Enterprises Initiative”, which seeks to establish a platform for ILO engagement with enterprises which would contribute to their sustainability and to ILO goals. Moreover, the ILCs 2007 and 2013 have adopted conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises, as well as conclusions concerning



Enterprise Seychelles Agency

ESA supports the enhancement of entrepreneurs, assists enterprises in the early steps of the business lifecycle, and supports the expansion and growth of the Seychellois MSMEs. ESA offers a wide range of e-learning tools, runs a seed capital grant scheme for start-ups, and has developed a COVID-19 toolkit for SMEs, including micro-enterprises in the informal economy.

The vast majority of jobs in all countries are generated by private sector enterprises, in particular small and medium enterprises (SMEs). SMEs need, in addition to a favourable external environment (see section 0), a number of support services, including entrepreneurship and management training, access to relevant business development services (BDS), including access to finance and access to markets, as well as legal protection, information services, advice on value-chain development, and local economic development strategies. . The second model seeks to assist governments and social partners in establishing a conducive and enabling environment for enterprises (including the legal and

regulatory framework, the rule of law, the right to secure property and land rights). The third intervention model seeks to improve the functioning of markets and sectors through integrated and systemic value chain development, including through bottom-up approaches to “make markets work for the poor”. In addition, local economic development strategies have been devised to embed enterprise development into the local context. In many countries around the world, governments have established SME promotion agencies to deliver such support services in a rapid and flexible manner. The IPAD2019 acknowledges the existence of such agencies in many African nations, but proposes to expand the scope of services and target groups. The table below reports on the number of countries in which SME agencies operate:

Existence of SME agencies				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have established SME agencies	Involvement of employers such agencies	Involvement of workers in such agencies	Involvement of the ILO in such agencies
49	33	17	12	4

In the vast majority of cases, these agencies have been established many years or even decades prior to the adoption of the Abidjan Declaration; these agencies exist under many different names, most have a parastatal nature, some countries (for example South Africa and Zimbabwe) have established dedicated government departments for SMEs while the SME agency of Mauritius is registered as a company. Most agencies provide business support, entrepreneurship training, access to finance (including through public investments) and, in some countries, access to local and international markets. The level of involvement of employers’ and workers’ organizations in the operations of SME agencies appears reasonable, but the scarcity of countries having received Office support in establishing SME agencies is surprising, since SME development is one of ILO’s largest development cooperation programme, and some of its products, such as “Start and Improve your Business” (SIYB/GERME) is well known throughout Africa. Five of the six RECs that have responded to the IPAD2019 questionnaire report that they facilitate regional cooperation in support of SME development in their respective subregions.

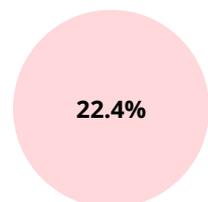
4.3. Constituents' knowledge about productivity

The importance of productivity for decent work and sustainable development has already been underlined in section 0 of the present report. This section is devoted to the constituents'

Constituent's involvement in productivity enhancement – the case of Botswana

The Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC) is a parastatal with a tripartite board; it has the mandate of stimulating and generating productivity consciousness, and to promote increased productivity in all sectors of the economy. The BNPC is currently developing a national productivity dashboard which, once completed, will provide information relating to national productivity indicators and related sub indicators.

knowledge and capacity on the key drivers of productivity growth, since governments, employers and trade unions are united in the quest for greater productivity as a source of wealth. At the firm level, it is essential to promote workplace cooperation between management and the workforce to ensure that productivity gains are shared equitably between workers and employers. However, the respective question ¹⁴ in the IPAD2019 questionnaire might have been too specific to yield reasonable results, since most constituents did not respond at all to it, while others cited their efforts to enhance productivity in general, which is the topic of section 0). As a result, very few constituents responded positively to the question:



Systems to increase constituents' knowledge about productivity				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have created such systems	Involvement of employers in such systems	Involvement of workers in such systems	Involvement of the ILO in such systems
49	11	5	6	3

A few countries – Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Uganda and Zimbabwe – have established councils or commissions to facilitate government – private sector dialogue and learning on productivity and competitiveness. A few have set up productivity centers (see next section), and others have incorporated productivity concerns into existing structures, such as the national employment observatory of Mali. Several employers' organizations are themselves running productivity courses, provide advisory services, for the benefit of their members. The Office's involvement in those efforts is very limited.

4.4. Productivity centres

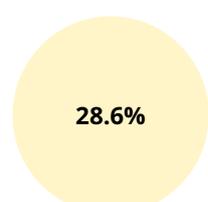
The Pan-African Productivity Association (PAPA)

PAPA was founded in 1990 at the margins of the 7th World Productivity Congress in Malaysia in November 1990; it currently has eight member organizations. The Association, which is based in Pretoria, SA, seeks to:

- ▶ Encourage the development of a productivity culture in African economies.
- ▶ Foster co-operation and collaboration between national productivity organizations.
- ▶ Facilitate the establishment and development of national productivity organizations, centers' or institutions in all African countries.
- ▶ Facilitate and promote tripartism in enhancing productivity.

At present, the ILO is cooperating with PAPA in promoting productivity enhancement in Malawi and in Zimbabwe. This work could be easily replicated in other countries.

Raising productivity - and ensuring that the productivity gains are equitably shared between business owners and investors (higher profits and shareholder value) and workers (higher wages and better working conditions) – is of critical importance for poverty reduction. The virtuous circle of productivity, employment and development can be fuelled through the re-investment of productivity gains into product and process innovations, plant and equipment improvements, and measures to enhance the skills and improve the work environment of the workforce. Productivity has been included into one of the six key priority areas of the African Union Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development in Africa (known as "Ouagadougou + 10"); the action plan calls for the accelerated implementation of the African Productivity Agenda, the development of an African Productivity and Competitiveness Index, and the establishment of an African Productivity Council (APCO). The African 2063 Agenda also refers to productivity as an engine for the industrialisation and the enhancing of the



¹⁴ Has the country developed a system permitting to increase the constituents' knowledge and capacity on the key drivers of productivity growth?

competitiveness of the continent in the global economy. Productivity growth, therefore, appears several times in the Abidjan Declaration, whereas the Declaration’s IPAD2019 states that “this approach¹⁵ should be adopted by the national Productivity Centres, though these currently exist in only eight African countries. In addition to strengthening the capacity of the existing centres in Africa, it would be important to establish such centres in other African countries. At present, the situation with regard to productivity centres is as follows:

Countries that have established productivity centres				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have created such centres	Involvement of employers in such centres	Involvement of workers in such centres	Involvement of the ILO in such centres
49	15	6	7	2

The list of 15 countries having declared that they operate a productivity centre includes six of the eight that established such centres prior to the Abidjan Declaration. Côte d’Ivoire has in 2021 designed a national productivity strategy (not a centre), Ethiopia operates nine product-specific productivity institutes whereas Guinea implements a national programme to enhance agricultural productivity. Ghana’s Management Development and Productivity Institute (MDPI) was established as far back as 1967, under a UNDP-ILO project. Although productivity centres usually involve social partners, the role of employers’ and workers’ organizations has not always been mentioned in the questionnaires. The present role of the Office in initiating and supporting productivity centres is rather limited, but it should be recalled that the majority of existing centres benefitted from ILO support in their start-up phase. At the regional level, ECOWAS has formulated a West African Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP).

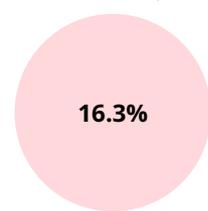
4.5. MNE Declaration

The Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (commonly referred to as “MNE Declaration”) provides guidelines for enhancing the positive contribution that enterprises through their operations can make to achieve decent work for all and to mitigate and resolve potential negative impacts. Its principles are addressed to multinational and national enterprises, governments of home and host countries, and

The MNE Declaration in Sierra Leone

Representatives from Government and the social partners took part in an MNE training course organized by ITC-ILO which led to the appointment of four national focal points for the promotion of the MNE Declaration in Sierra Leone. The focal points, who are located in the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Sierra Leone Local Content Agency, and in employers’ and workers’ organizations developed an action plan, which included the mainstreaming of the MNE Declaration in the Sierra Leone SDG Investment Plan; the establishment of an MNE Unit in the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MOLSS); the inclusion of the promotion of the ILO MNE Declaration in the 2022 Annual budget of the MOLSS; and the creation of a Technical Working Group to coordinate the promotion of the MNE Declaration in Sierra Leone.

employers’ and workers’ organizations providing guidance in areas such as employment, training, conditions of work and life, industrial relations as well as general policies. The guidance provided is founded substantially on principles contained in international labour standards. The fifth edition of the MNE Declaration was adopted in March 2017 by the ILO Governing Body to respond to new economic realities, including increased international investment and trade, and the growth of global supply chains. The Declaration provides guidelines for enhancing the positive social and labour effects of the operations and governance of multinational enterprises to achieve decent work for all, a universal goal recognized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The IPAD2019 stated that “the ILO will continue promoting the full implementation of the MNE Declaration, including through support to the tripartite constituents on the African continent. Hence, question 4.5 of the IPAD2019 questionnaire focused on the promotion of the MNE Declaration in Africa:



Promotion of the MNE Declaration				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have taken steps to promote the MNE Declaration	Involvement of employers in such initiatives	Involvement of workers in such initiatives	Involvement of the ILO in such initiatives
49	8	14	9	9

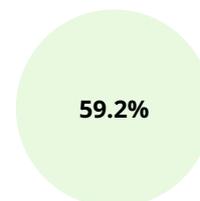
¹⁵ That is, ILO’s integrated approach to productivity, as outlined in para. 21 of the IPAD2019.

The majority of respondents did not answer the question at all, and some of those who did reported activities other than the promotion of the MNE Declaration. Two countries (Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal) mentioned being involved in the implementation of a French-funded project (RAF/16/54/FRA) designed specifically to promote the MNE Declaration. African government representatives and social partners reported having taken part in courses on the MNE Declaration organized by the International Training Centre of the ILO. The table above shows that only a limited number of governments, employers' and workers' organizations were involved in activities aimed at promoting the MNE Declaration. Overall, the level of awareness and understanding of the relevance of the MNE Declaration for the region seems to remain limited among constituents, although the region is more and more part of global production systems and attracting foreign direct investment that should benefit decent work. At the same time, the Office is receiving an increasing number of requests from constituents in the region for capacity-building in this area. Moreover, three African countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Sierra Leone) have [appointed national focal points for the promotion of the MNE Declaration](#) in accordance with its annex II. CRADAT reports that the MNE Declaration is part of its curriculum for the training of labour inspectors.

5. Effective and inclusive tripartism and social dialogue

5.1. Capacity-building for constituents

The ILO defines capacity-building as a “process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time”. The ILO’s role in capacity development efforts is to “help, wherever necessary, the institutional capacity of member States, as well as representative organizations of employers and workers, to facilitate meaningful and coherent social policy and sustainable development”. Capacity development is hence understood as an endogenous process in which the role of the Office is that of a supporter led by its constituents’ priorities and needs. The ILO distinguishes three mutually reinforcing and interdependent levels of capacity development: individual, organizational, and resulting from the enabling environment. The first means increasing the



skills and abilities of individuals; the second focuses on increasing the capacity of organizations to fulfil their mandates; and the third involves improvements in policies, legislation, regulations, labour market institutions, and societal systems.

Capacity-building for Constituents – the case of Eswatini

Eswatini has been mentioned several times in the report of ILO’s supervisory bodies because some of her laws were not consistent with ILO instruments and values. The Swazi government mobilized social dialogue processes to reform these laws, such as the Public Service Act, the Correctional Service Act, the Employment Act (ongoing), Public Order Act, and the Code of Good Practice on Industrial and Protest Actions. This process was strongly supported by the ILO, and closely involved the country’s employers’ and works’ organizations.

The 335th Session of the Governing Body (March 2019) discussed an [ILO-wide strategy for institutional capacity development](#), and adopted a comprehensive approach to integrate capacity-building efforts for constituents in all ILO activities, including those financed from extra-budgetary resources. The IPAD2019 therefore called upon constituents to apply this approach to strengthen the capacity of workers’ and employers’ organizations at national and regional levels, including through their active involvement in project design and implementation, as well as in UN reform processes. This recommendation has been implemented to a large extent:

Capacity-building for constituents				
Relevant questionnaires	Governments that have strengthened the capacity of constituents	Involvement of employers in capacity-building	Involvement of workers in capacity-building	Involvement of the ILO in capacity-building
49	29	23	21	33

In many instances, capacity-building interventions were organized through, or in conjunction with, social dialogue institutions, which exist in the great majority of African countries (see section 5.2) under different names and configurations. In several countries, systematic capacity-building programmes for constituents were included as a priority in DWCPs; ILO offices are systematically involved in capacity-building programmes, often in cooperation with the ITC Turin. In several countries, trade union confederations or national employers’ organizations are organizing training and information sessions for their affiliates. Subjects such as international labour standards, social dialogue or ILO reporting requirements were frequently mentioned as areas for capacity-building.

It is important to stress that capacity-building for constituents is a cross-cutting concern that transcends all ILO activities in all member States. Virtually all development cooperation projects involve the constituents in one way or another, be it through tripartite project governance structures or through implementation agreements, and therefore contribute to capacity-building. The process of formulating, monitoring and implementing a DWCP constitutes in itself a capacity-building exercise. The participation of employers’ and workers’ organizations in the board of state corporations (for example national social security funds) strengthens the capacity of those constituents in specific technical domains.

Capacity-building is the very *raison-d’être* of the labour administration centres, although their courses are usually confined to government officials only.

5.2. Social dialogue institutions

Social Dialogue in Tunisia – Office support

The tremendous contribution of social dialogue to peace and stability in Tunisia was recognized by the Nobel Prize Committee when it awarded the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize to the [Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet](#), which involved the social partners, but not the government. A tripartite Social Dialogue Council was established in 2017. During the reporting period, the Office has been strengthening the Council through:

- ▶ the implementation of an electronic voting system and an electronic document management system (hardware and software);
- ▶ the development of a comprehensive communication plan for the Council;
- ▶ a capacity-building plan for Council members and staff, with a focus on labour standards to strengthen the work of the Council's six technical commissions).

Social dialogue is defined by the ILO to include all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among, representatives of government, worker and employers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy. Social dialogue takes many different forms. It may exist as a tripartite process, with the government as an official party to the dialogue, or it may consist of bipartite relations between the representatives of labour and management at company level (or trade unions and employers' organizations at higher levels). ILO Conventions that are particularly important for social dialogue include: the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), the Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135), the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), and the Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154).



Institutions for social dialogue, which is based on the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining, take into account each country's cultural, historical, economic and political context. There is no standard model of social

dialogue that can be applied uniformly across countries or exported from one country to another. Adapting social dialogue institutions and practices to the national situation is key to ensuring effective representation in the process and its outcomes.

Recognizing the crucial importance of social dialogue, the IPAD2019 calls for the improvement of mechanisms for effective and inclusive social dialogue, and for the strengthening of the capacity and impact of the various forms of social dialogue, including at cross-border level. This has been happening in most African countries, even though most social dialogue institutions have been established long before the adoption of the Abidjan Declaration:

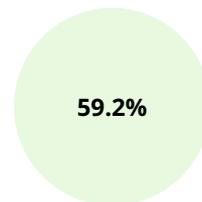
Social Dialogue Institutions				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have established social dialogue institutions	Employers' responses relating to such institutions	Workers' responses relating to such institutions	Support by the ILO to such institutions
49	44	31	27	26

There is a rich diversity in institutional arrangements, legal frameworks and traditions and practices of social dialogue throughout the continent: The Central African Republic has put in place a *Tripartite National Steering Committee of the National Pact on Social Stability and Economic Recovery*; Mozambique has a *Consultative Labour Commission*, and United Republic of Tanzania a *Labour, Economic and Social Council (LESCO)*, to cite a few examples. Three countries (Algeria, Mauritania and South Sudan) report the establishment or revitalization of social dialogue structures during the IPAD2019 period; two countries (Democratic Republic of the Congo and Guinea) reported that social dialogue structures exist, but are either suspended or dormant. As all social dialogue institutions are tripartite, employers' and workers' organizations are systematically involved, even if this is not mentioned in the IPAD2019 questionnaire. Similarly, ILO offices are always in touch with such structures, and most structures have benefitted from ILO support in the past.

The labour administration centres are naturally involved in capacity-building activities around social dialogue. ECOWAS has established a regional social dialogue forum, SADC has put in place a tripartite Employment and Labour Sector, and subregional employers' and workers' organizations exist in five of the six RECs/or that have competed the IPAD2019 questionnaire.

5.3. Scope of social dialogue

As outlined above (section 0), the term “social dialogue” covers the interaction between representatives of government, workers and employers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy. It is therefore not confined to labour and employment issues only, but includes:



Capacity-building for constituents – the case of Eswatini

Eswatini has been mentioned several times in the report of ILO’s supervisory bodies because some of her laws were not consistent with ILO instruments and values. The Swazi government mobilized social dialogue processes to reform these laws, such as the Public Service Act, the Correctional Service Act, the Employment Act (ongoing), Public Order Act, and the Code of Good Practice on Industrial and Protest Actions. This process was strongly supported by the ILO, and closely involved the country’s employers’ and workers’ organizations.

- ▶ negotiation, consultation and information exchange between and among the different actors;
- ▶ collective bargaining between representatives of employers and of workers;
- ▶ dispute prevention and resolution;
- ▶ tripartite social dialogue on matters of economic and social policy; and
- ▶ other instruments of social dialogue, including international framework agreements.

In many African countries, social dialogue institutions coexist with national economic and social councils; the latter, while fulfilling a broader mandate than labour issues, involve employers’ and workers’ organizations as well. At the continental level, these councils have formed the Union of Economic and Social Councils of Africa (UCESA), which was formed in 1994 and currently comprises 19, mostly francophone, member States. There is also the “Internationale Francophone pour le Dialogue Social”, a social dialogue network of 20 francophone African countries.

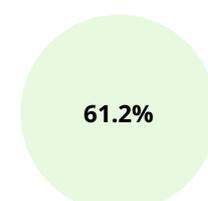
The IPAD2019 questionnaire sought to assess to what extent the mandate of the national social dialogue institution or mechanism cover all areas related to economic and social development. This was the case in a large number of countries, as shown below:

Scope of social dialogue institutions				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries in which social dialogue institutions cover all social and economic areas	Number of employers having responded to this question	Number of workers having responded to this question	Support by the ILO in this area
49	30	18	17	13

Two additional countries (Liberia and South Sudan) reported that the national social dialogue structure will in the future cover broader economic and social issues. Cabo Verde pointed out that the existing social and economic council is currently dormant, while in Mozambique, the Consultative Labour Commission does have the mandate to cover all areas related to economic and social development, but in practice focuses on labour issues only. Employers’ and workers’ organizations generally support the broadening of the scope of social dialogue institutions, since any decision in the economic and social fields has a direct impact on the world of work. ILO offices provide multi-faceted support to social dialogue structures, mostly through studies and advisory services.

5.4. Inclusion of marginalized groups in social dialogue processes

An ILC report¹⁶ of 2004 concluded that “it is the joint responsibility of governments and the representative organizations of employers and workers to ensure that representatives of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of the active population are associated as closely as possible with the formulation and implementation of measures of which they should be the prime beneficiaries.”



People with disabilities make up an estimated one billion, or 15 per cent, of the world’s population. About 80 per cent are of working age. However, people with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, face enormous attitudinal, physical and informational barriers to equal opportunities in the world of work, and their concerns are not always discussed in social dialogue structures.

¹⁶ ILO, 2004. Promoting employment: Policies, skills, enterprises. ILC.92/III/1B.

Social Dialogue and informal economy actors – the case of Burkina Faso

In Burkina Faso, as in many other African countries, the actors of the informal economy have formed various types of associations and professional groups. These groups have established a National Council of the Informal Economy (CNEI), with currently 10,000 members and regional chapter in each of Burkina's 13 administrative regions. The CNEI is a member of the country's employers' organization CNPB, which thereby represents the interests of informal economy actors in social dialogue institutions.

Similarly, the interest of youths are seldom high on the list of priorities of social dialogue institutions; however, an enlarged social dialogue that includes youth representatives is a precondition to reducing skills mismatch (section 0) and, in general, any policy and strategy related to skills and vocational training.

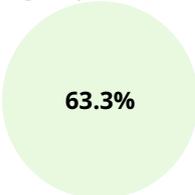
Thirdly, informal economy actors, economic units and workers, which constitute the vast majority of the labour force in Africa, are, in many countries, excluded from social dialogue, because the employers' and workers' organizations of these countries represents exclusively the formal sector (even though many begin to reach out to the informal economy, as discussed in section 0)

It is for this reason that the IPAD2019 called for the effective representation of the interests of youth, disabled persons and informal economy actors in social dialogue

institutions and processes; within the framework of Recommendation No. 204 and the 2018 resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism. Many countries reported positive action in this area:

Representation of marginalized groups in social dialogue institutions				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries which include these groups in social dialogue institutions or processes	Number of employers having responded to this question	Number of employers having responded to this question	Support by the ILO in this area
49	31	15	17	11

However, in numerous instances, governments referred to the existence of public agencies providing support to youths, persons with disabilities, or informal economy actors; this does not necessarily mean that these groups are represented in social dialogue structures. A number of countries reported that the existing employers' and workers' organizations represent the interests of marginalized groups, thereby ensuring that their concerns are addressed through social dialogue. Some countries answered only part of the relevant IPAD2019 question, referring to the inclusion of youths only, or persons with disability only, or informal economy actors only, not all three groups. And finally, some countries responded that, for example, this issue of disability (for example) was a thematic area of social dialogue. Again, this does not mean the persons with disability actively and directly participate in social dialogue. Employers' and workers' organizations often stated that they represent the interests of marginalized groups, without however mentioning whether these groups are represented in the leadership of the organizations. However, in countries where national apex bodies of such groups exist, they are sometime included in social dialogue processes, as for example in South Africa's NEDLAC. This underlines the importance of organization-building among youths, persons with disability, and informal economy actors. At the level of RECs, marginalized groups are not sufficiently represented in regional social dialogue processes and/or regional social partner organizations, which may be (partly) due to the fact that these groups have not yet established representative structures at the subregional level.



5.5. Capacity of labour administrations to participate in social dialogue

Labour administration has two principal roles to play in social dialogue, whether tripartite or bipartite, namely those of:

- ▶ *Promoting social dialogue:* Under international labour standards, labour administrations are made responsible for promoting consultation with the social partners and for taking appropriate measures to ensure that such consultation is regular and effective. They suggest the creation of specific procedure within the national context so as to ensure and foster participation by the social partners. They also support bipartite and social dialogue between employers and workers and their respective organizations including through the establishment of mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of labour disputes
- ▶ *Serving as a protagonist in social dialogue:* Labour administration plays a variety of roles, including the one of employer in the public sector. Labour administration must take part in tripartism as a partner, in order to encourage exchanges and to find support for its policies and actions. The content of social dialogue includes all matters connected with the areas of activity of labour administration at the national level. Labour administration actions with regard to consultation at the national level should specifically entail creating consultation bodies

attached to ministerial structures, as well as establishing permanent secretariats to ensure sustainability and efficient functioning.

To fulfil these functions labour administrations require the necessary (human, material and financial) resources, as well as the appropriate technical capacity to initiate, manage and take part in social dialogue processes. Hence, the IPAD2019 underlines the need to ensure “effective and adequately resourced labour administrations that have problem-solving and compromise-seeking capacities, and robust social dialogue institutions”. Numerous African countries have taken steps in that direction:



Strengthening the capacity of labour administrations in the area of social dialogue				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries which have strengthened the social dialogue capacity of labour administrations	Number of employers having responded to this question	Number of employers having responded to this question	Support by the ILO in this area
47	30	13	17	16

The African Regional Labour Administration Centre (ARLAC)

ARLAC emerged in 1974 from an ILO/UNDP labour administration project which in 1982 was upgraded to a regional organization whose headquarters was moved in 1986 from Nairobi to Harare. ARLAC covers all English-speaking African countries, and conducts capacity-building activities for labour and allied ministries, as well as employers’ organizations, workers’ organizations and other national and international stakeholders in support of decent work and sustainable development. It also offers research and consultancy services.

In 2017, the ARLAC Board approved a comprehensive re-engineering strategy whose progress was evaluated in 2021 by the ITC-ILO. The evaluation came, inter alia, to the conclusion that ARLAC needs to focus more on digital platforms and digital training services.

In the majority of cases, governments have organized short-term courses for labour administration officials, or have facilitated the participation of these officials in courses offered by third parties, including the regional labour administration centres CRADAT and ARLAC, and the ITC-ILO in Turin. A few countries have increased the budgetary allocation to labour administrations, and some have restructured these services to make them more efficient. The social partners who responded to this question generally called for stronger, more effective labour administration services. The two regional labour administration centres (ARLAC and CRADAT) are naturally closely involved in such capacity-building efforts.

5.6. Informal economy and social partners

Everywhere in the world, people in the informal economy are excluded from or under-represented in social dialogue institutions and collective bargaining processes. In order to secure and exercise an independent voice at work, workers and employers need representational security. Representational security at work is based on the freedom of workers, employers and own-account workers, to form and join organizations of their own choosing without fear of reprisal or intimidation. ... Freedom of association and the right to organize constitute a fundamental human right. It is also a key enabling right. If workers or employers are denied the possibility of organizing, they will not have access to a range of other rights at work.¹⁷

The very fact that in many African countries the informal economy employs up to 90 per cent of the national labour force provides a compelling incentive for trade unions and employers’ organizations to reach out to the informal economy. Organizing workers in the informal economy allows social partner organizations to increase their numerical strength and associational power. While in the past, most employers’ and workers’ organizations in Africa confined their membership and services to the formal economy, many of them now welcome members from the informal economy as well. Question 5.6 of the IPAD2019 questionnaire was formulated to measure the extent of informal economy participation in formal employers’ and workers’ organizations.

¹⁷ Report of the Director-General: Decent Work and the Informal Economy, 90th Session; 2002, Geneva, ILO

Informal economy participation in employers' and workers' organizations				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries in which informal economy actors can affiliate with social partners	Employers' organizations accepting members from the informal economy	Trade unions accepting members from the informal economy	Support by the ILO to facilitate IE membership
49	15	17	25	19

Informal economy actors and social partners – the case of Namibia

The Namibia Informal Traders and Shebeen Workers Union (NITSWU) was registered in 2017 and has been accepted as a member by the Trade Union Congress of Namibia (TUCNA). Among NITSWU's top priorities is the extension of social protection to informal economy workers.

The Namibia Informal Sector Organisation (NISO) represents informal businesses. It is not a member of the Namibian Employers' Federation (NEF), but the two signed an MoU in 2015 whereby the NEF commits to support NISO in any negotiations with national and local authorities to improve the business environment of NISO members.

Question 5.6 was more relevant to employers' and workers' organizations than to governments, the low number of government replies is therefore not surprising. The governments responding to the question mostly stated that legally, informal economy were allowed to join social partner organization since the freedom of association principle applied to *all* workers. The social partners use three strategies to interact with informal economy actors:

- ▶ Some represent the interests of the informal economy vis-à-vis the State or third parties without however extending membership to the informal economy actors themselves.
- ▶ Some enrol informal economy operators into existing employers' and workers' organizations.
- ▶ Some extend membership to national and/or sectoral organizations of the informal economy.

Several ILO offices in the region support the formation of informal economy umbrella organizations, and facilitate

their membership in employers' and workers' organizations. For example, the trade union confederations of Benin, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria Rwanda, Sierra Leone, United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and other countries count informal economy organizations among their membership. The employers' organizations of Ghana and Kenya count informal businesses in their ranks.

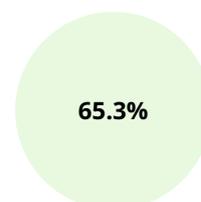
6. Social and labour protection for all

Chapter 6 of the report reviews the progress made by African countries in extending social protection to all, including through cash transfer programmes. This includes the design of a regional strategy for accelerating social protection coverage in Africa, which was officially launched in November 2021. The regional programme shall increase the social protection coverage in Africa from currently 17.4 per cent to 40 per cent by 2025.

Chapter 6 also examines the state of labour migration policies in Africa.

6.1. Extension of social protection to the informal economy

The universal right to social protection must be built into national policies and laws and global and regional frameworks in order to reduce poverty, inequality and social exclusion and to allow such protection to act as an automatic social and economic stabilizer. Unfortunately however, Some 76 per cent of the African population is excluded from legal health coverage, with a much higher rate of non-coverage in sub-Saharan Africa (84 per cent) compared to North Africa (42 per cent).¹⁸ Social protection deficits are greatest in the informal economy, which employs the vast majority of the African labour force. Against this background, a great number of African countries have in



ILO support to the extension of social protection in Egypt

The ILO has been supporting the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity (MOSS) on the social insurance and pension legislation reform since 2014, with the result that a new social insurance and pension law, which is in compliance with ILO C.102 and which extends social protection coverage to informal workers, was adopted in 2019. During the entire process, the ILO supported the MOSS through policy and legal support, technical studies, training sessions, and knowledge-sharing events involving partners from the North and from the Global South.

recent years increased their efforts to extend social security coverage to informal economy workers and the rural population through a variety of initiatives. This includes the establishment of national social protection floors, conditional and/or unconditional cash transfer programmes, the introduction of universal health insurance coverage (UHC), public works programmes targeting unemployed youth and, in some countries, the inclusion, on a voluntary basis, of own-account workers into national pension and/or unemployment insurance schemes. Among these initiatives, the initiation of health coverage for all (UHC) has made the greatest advances. The IPAD2019 called for an improvement in the coverage, adequacy and governance of social protection systems, including towards workers and SMEs in the informal economy. The status of this recommendation was assessed through question 6.1 of the IPAD2019 questionnaire:

Extension of social protection to the informal economy				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have taken steps in that direction	Involvement of Employers' organizations	Involvement of trade unions	Support by the ILO
49	32	19	19	26

As can be seen from the table, a large number of African countries have undertaken efforts to extend the coverage of existing social protection systems, schemes and institutions to informal economy workers and operators, or have designed special programmes. Many governments have cited cash transfer programmes which benefit some categories of informal economy actors, and numerous countries have adopted various systems of UHC, many of which involve decentralized community-based or mutual benefit health insurance structures. Several countries, including Cameroon, Comoros, Eswatini and South Sudan, envisage the extension of social protection to the informal economy in the coming years. A number of respondents have reported their efforts to support informal economy actors during the COVID-19 pandemic, which could be seen as a form of social protection. A few African countries, including Cabo Verde, Eswatini, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia, provide free health care to their citizens in public facilities, which means that UHC is already achieved. The employers' and workers' organizations are very much in favour of the extension of social protection to the informal economy, and provide support where possible. A large number of ILO projects provide technical assistance in the area of social protection, be it through actuarial reviews, feasibility studies, project design or direct assistance. Finally, it should be noted that none of the respondent has answered the section part of question 6.1, that is, "what percentage of informal economy actors is effectively covered by those schemes", probably because the data are simply not available.

¹⁸ World Social Protection Report 2020–22; 2021, ILO, Geneva.

6.2. Social protection governance

The great majority of African countries have established national social protection agencies, pension fund, health insurance schemes etc., which, in most cases, targeted originally civil

▶ Improving the governance of social protection – and example from Mauritania

Between October and December 2020, the National Social Security Fund of Mauritania (CNSS) underwent an audit which recommended that the Fund should extend its coverage to include workers from the semi-formal and informal sector. The Board of Directors of the CNSS decided to translate these recommendations into operational action during the year 2022. Moreover, the audit recommended the acquisition of adequate IT equipment and of integrated management software packages, the setting up of an online services portal, and the recruitment and training of human resources etc. This exercise received strong support from the ILO.

servants, were then extended to cover private sector employees in the formal economy and more recently, informal economy actors as well (see section 0). The long-term sustainability of these agencies and funds is of critical importance for the trustworthiness of these public or parastatal institutions. It is therefore necessary to ensure the sustainability and fairness of social protection systems by prioritizing reliable and equitable forms of domestic financing, complemented by international cooperation and support where necessary, and to strengthen governance of social protection systems through institutional leadership, multi-sector coordination and the participation of social partners and other relevant and representative organisations, to generate broad-based support and promote the effectiveness of services. Hence, question 6.2 of the IPAD2019 questionnaire was formulated to assess progress in enhancing the sustainability and governance of social protection schemes in Africa:

73.5%

Improved financial and administrative governance of national social protection systems

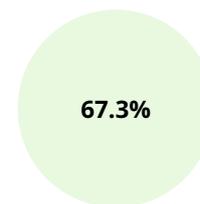
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have taken steps to improve SP governance	Involvement of Employers' organizations in such efforts	Involvement of trade unions in such efforts	Support by the ILO to such efforts
49	36	20	14	19

A large number of countries report progress in this area; some have recently adopted social protection-related legislation (Benin, Egypt, Mali and others), several have carried out actuarial reviews, of with technical support from the ILO (Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda etc.), some have improved the targeting of social assistance programmes to reduce costs (Cabo Verde, Namibia, Senegal, Somalia), some have established new structures, or reorganized existing ones (Comoros, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, United Republic of Tanzania), and some have introduced new managements information systems and/or digital services (Algeria, Cabo Verde, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and others). Lesotho has decided to provide the country's Central Bank with oversight powers over all pension schemes. Other countries are using the sustainability indicators developed by the Inter-African Conference on Social Protection (CIPRES)¹⁹ as a benchmark. A large number of governments and employers' and workers' organizations underline in their replies the importance of tripartite participation in the governance of social protection agencies and funds. The ILO implements several, externally funded social protection projects in Africa, but much of its technical assistance, for example the actuarial reviews, is financed from regular budget resources.

¹⁹ CIPRES is a network of social protection agencies from 16 French-speaking African countries. CRADAT has established a partnership with CIPRES to apply the latter's training policy.

6.3. Cash transfer programmes

Cash transfers have been increasingly adopted by countries worldwide as central elements of their social protection and poverty reduction strategies. All cash transfer programmes seek to lift



Cash transfer programmes – the case of Mozambique

Since June 2020, the Government of Mozambique implements a COVID-19 Social Protection Response Plan, which was designed to guarantee social support and reinforce the resilience of poor and vulnerable households who are exposed to the COVID-19 pandemic's effects. The plan, which was developed in consultation with the social partners and civil society, include the expansion of basic, non-contributory social protection system, prioritizing those who are the most vulnerable to the crisis. The plan aims at providing cash transfers to 1,695,004 households, of whom 1,102,825 new beneficiary households which were added to the existing cash-transfer beneficiaries as a result of the Corona pandemic. 68 per cent of those new beneficiaries are female-headed households.

the current generation out of poverty, as well as breaking the cycle of poverty for the next generation through the development of human capital. Unconditional cash transfers have developed on the premise that giving cash to citizens allows them to have autonomy over their own lives. From a human rights perspective, cash transfers are a means to ensure the human rights to social protection and an adequate standard of living for all members of society, including first and foremost the fundamental right to food. The ILO advocates for an approach that combines cash transfers with active labour market policies (ALMPs). In fact, ALMPs can be a key complement to income support, providing those beneficiaries who are of working-age and able to take up employment with the means of finding more sustainable sources of income and potentially paving their way into formal employment. In this context, the IPAD2019 recommended the design and implementation of cash transfer programmes to households living below the national poverty line and to vulnerable groups. Many countries have followed this recommendation:

Implementation of cash transfer programmes				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have introduced cash transfer programmes	Involvement of Employers' organizations in such programmes	Involvement of trade unions in such programmes	Support by the ILO to such programmes
49	33	6	11	9

A large number of countries have been implementing cash-transfer programmes prior to the adoption of the Abidjan Declaration, and many of those have increased the amounts paid out, the circle of eligible citizens, and/or the duration of financial support in response to the effects caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Such programmes come in different forms: periodic payments to specific target groups (the elderly, orphans, migrant workers, refugees, internally displaced persons, persons living with HIV-AIDS, etc.); food assistance, including school feeding programmes; cash-for-work through public works programmes; subsidies for the payment of utilities; tax breaks, etc. Several countries have reported the number of households benefiting from cash transfers, for example: Burkina Faso: 3,000; Burundi: 59,000; Cameroon: 30,000; Côte d'Ivoire: 408,000; Egypt: 3.35 million; Eswatini: 94,000; Madagascar: 189,000; Malawi: 293,000; Mauritania: 210,000; Togo: 60,000; Zambia: 616,000. The employers' and workers organizations are only marginally involved in the design and implementation of such programmes; the same applies to ILO offices, mainly due to the fact that cash transfer programmes are usually supported by other partners, such as the World Bank, UNICEF, WFP or the EU.

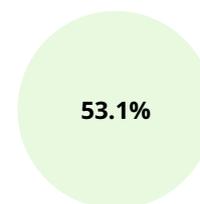
6.4. Labour migration policies

Cash transfer programmes – the case of Mozambique

Since June 2020, the Government of Mozambique implements a COVID-19 Social Protection Response Plan, which was designed to guarantee social support and reinforce the resilience of poor and vulnerable households who are exposed to the COVID-19 pandemic's effects. The plan, which was developed in consultation with the social partners and civil society, include the expansion of basic, non-contributory social protection system, prioritizing those who are the most vulnerable to the crisis. The plan aims at providing cash transfers to 1,695,004 households, of whom 1,102,825 new beneficiary households which were added to the existing cash-transfer beneficiaries as a result of the Corona pandemic. 68 per cent of those new beneficiaries are female-headed households.

International migration today is a global phenomenon of growing volume and complexity. Many countries are now places of origin, transit and destination of migrant workers. Labour migration movements have the potential to greatly impact the social and economic well-being of their countries of origin, transit and destination. The ILO works to forge policies to maximize the benefits of labour migration for all those involved, and strongly supports the [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#), which UN Member States adopted in September 2018.

The ILO estimates the number of migrant workers in Africa at 13.7 million, the majority of whom migrate within the African continent and often within the subregion of origin. The number of migrants is likely to grow in view of demographic shifts and, as a consequence of climate change. There is a need for more inclusive labour to ensure the effective protection of their rights and working conditions. Fair and effective labour migration frameworks



need to be developed, through social dialogue and intergovernmental cooperation, to advance equality of treatment for migrant workers, prevent human rights abuses and social dumping and promote compliance with international labour standards. The Office has committed itself through the IPAD2019 to enhance constituents' capacity to develop fair and effective labour migration frameworks, institutions and services to protect migrant workers. Labour migration policies have been designed in a growing number of African countries:

Existence of labour migration policies				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have formulated labour migration policies	Involvement of Employers' organizations in the design of such policies	Involvement of trade unions in the design of such policies	Support by the ILO for the design of such policies
49	26	13	12	17

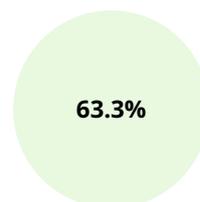
Among the 26 countries that developed labour migration policies, four, namely Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Seychelles and Zimbabwe, declare having adopted these policies during the mid-term review period. Six countries (Algeria, Djibouti, Liberia, Somalia, South Africa and Sudan) declared their intention to develop a labour migration policy in the near future. The involvement of social partners in the design of labour migration policies is relatively modest and should be promoted more actively. Cabo Verde has created a "Ministries of the Communities" which caters for the large number of nationals residing abroad (and including through a non-contributory pension for the diaspora), while Guinea has established a national observatory on migration. Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritania and Somalia have recently ratified the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143).

Labour migration issues at the continental and subregional levels is high on the agendas of the African Union Commission and the RECs; their role will be discussed in the respective sections.

7. Effectively applied up-to-date labour standards and promotion of gender equality

7.1. Strengthening of labour inspectorates

Labour inspection is a public function that ensures effective labour law compliance, and possesses wide powers and functions, including enforcement and sanctions that should be sufficiently dissuasive to deter violations of labour legislation while also providing corrective, developmental and technical advice, guidance, prevention tools and promoting workplace best practices. These functions should be regulated and balanced as part of a comprehensive compliance strategy in



▶ Labour inspectors and COVID-19

Labour inspectorates play a key role in response to COVID-19. In addition to verifying compliance with national legislation, labour inspectors provide advice to employers and workers assisting them in the development and implementation of workplace policies and programmes to prevent and control COVID-19 contagion. In response to COVID-19, many labour inspectorates around the world have been reprioritizing and changing methods of operation with regards protection of the safety and health of workers, control and assistance to the implementation of employment retention measures such as lay-offs, or changes in workplaces related to working time arrangements and other. Quite naturally, attention must be paid to the safety and health of labour inspectors themselves when visiting workplaces.

order to ensure decent working conditions and a safe working environment. Labour inspection systems, particularly those in developing countries, face numerous challenges that are common to labour administrations as a whole, including the need for increased financial resources, more duly qualified inspectors, better equipment and better training, and improved recruitment procedures.

Moreover, the ILO Constitution includes obligations on ILO Member States to report on international labour standards. This obligation lies with the government of member States, and in practice, is usually the responsibility of labour ministries. The reporting duty may be delegated to the labour inspectorate or to other units in the ministry of labour. Convention No. 144 recommends consulting with representative organisations of employers and workers when preparing the reports on the application of ILO standards. Consequently, paragraph 28 of the IPAD2019 urged governments to strengthen the capacity of labour administrations to develop and enforce legislation for effective labour market governance, and to report on the application of international labour standards. This has been achieved to a large extent:

Strengthening labour inspectorates and ILS reporting systems				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have strengthened the capacity of labour inspectorates	Number of employers' organizations that answered this question	Number of trade unions that answered this question	Capacity-building support by the ILO
49	31	11	13	25

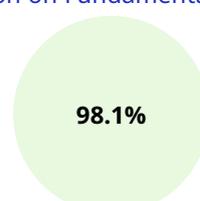
Most of the countries that answered “yes” to question 7.1 have organized a variety of training courses for labour inspectors, often with the support of the ILO, the ITC Turin and the labour administration centres. Several countries have been dispensing special courses for inspectors to enable them to use various checklists developed by the ILO to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus. Several countries have developed new strategic compliance plans for labour inspectors, and some have created new structures within the ministry of labour. Some countries have increased the operating budget of the labour inspectorate.

The RECs report relatively few activities relating to knowledge exchange around labour inspection and ILS reporting. ECOWAS, however, has issued a directive on the harmonization of labour laws in its subregion, which is marked by a diversity of legal cultures, systems of working relations, and areas of regulation and practice.

7.2. Ratification of ILO's fundamental Conventions

In June 1998, the 86th Session of the International Labour Conference adopted the ILO [Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#). The Declaration reasserted the commitment of ILO's Member States to respect, promote and universally fulfil the principles relating to four fundamental rights at work:

- ▶ Freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining (Conventions Nos 87 and 98).
- ▶ Elimination of all forms of forced or obligatory labour (Conventions Nos 29 and 105).



- ▶ Effective abolition of child labour (Conventions Nos 100 and 111).
- ▶ Elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation (Conventions Nos 138 and 182).

Most importantly, the 1998 Declaration commits ILO Member States to respect and promote principles and rights in these four categories, whether or not they have ratified the relevant Conventions. Member States that have not ratified one or more of the core Conventions are asked each year to report on the status of the relevant rights and principles within their borders, noting impediments to ratification, and areas where assistance may be required.

Paragraph 8 of the IPAD2019 points out that the Office will continue to promote the ratification and application of international labour standards by African governments, with an emphasis on fundamental and governance standards. Hence, question 7.2 of the IPAD2019 questionnaire sought to assess the status of ratification of the eight fundamental Conventions in Africa.

The table below is based on ILO NATLEX, which complements the information on ratifications contained in the IPAD2019 questionnaire:

Ratification of the ILO's Fundamental Conventions in Africa									
Principle	Freedom of association		Forced labour		Discrimination		Child labour		
	C.87	C.98	C.29	C.105	C.100	C.111	C.138	C.182	
Convention	C.87	C.98	C.29	C.105	C.100	C.111	C.138	C.182	
Ratified	50	54	54	54	52	54	52	54	
Not ratified	4	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	

The table shows that out of a possible total of 432 ratifications (8 * 54), 424 (98.1 per cent) have actually taken place already. Four African countries have not yet ratified the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) (Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Morocco, South Sudan), two have not ratified the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), as well as the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) (Liberia, Somalia). In the latter case, the delay in ratification may be due to the long-lasting civil strife that affecting both nations. Sudan has ratified Convention No. 87 in 2021. The ILO Protocol 29, which was adopted in 2014 and complements the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), has been ratified by 13 African countries so far.²⁰

In general one can state that the African nations have made tremendous progress over the past 60 years in ratifying the ILO's core Conventions.

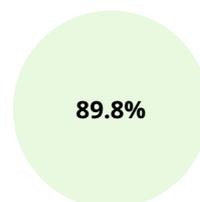
7.3. Elimination of forced labour and of child labour

▶ The fight against child labour in Benin

Benin's second national action plan on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour (WFCL) covers the period 2019–23, whose overarching objective is to reduce by 2023 the incidence of the WFCL by 70 per cent. The action plan pursues six intervention areas, namely:

- ▶ strengthening the legislative and institutional framework for WFCL;
- ▶ information, awareness and mobilization for behavioural change;
- ▶ education and training;
- ▶ protection, monitoring and care of child victims of WFCL;
- ▶ reduction of socio-economic vulnerability of households;
- ▶ institutional mechanisms and monitoring-evaluation of the NAP.

The objective encapsulated in this heading is also subject of four of the ILO's eight fundamental Conventions. According to ILO estimates, 40.3 million people are in modern slavery globally, including 24.9 in forced labour and 15.4 million in forced marriage; one in four victims of modern slavery are children.



In addition, 160 million children are child labourers; this includes 79 million children who work in hazardous child labour. More than half of the 160 million children victims of child labour are aged 5–11 years. On the African continent, it is estimated that one-fifth of all children are involved in child labour, a proportion more than twice as high as in any other region. Almost 10 per cent of African children are in hazardous work, again highest of all the world's regions. In absolute figures, Africa has the largest number of child labourers worldwide; 92 million African children are estimated to be in child labour and 42 million in hazardous work. Moreover, the ILO estimates that the total number of victims of forced labour in Africa is 3.7 million people – the second largest number after South-East Asia. However, these are only estimates and, taking into consideration that

many victims are exploited in the informal sector, the real number could be even higher.

²⁰ Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Sudan and Zimbabwe.

The ILO has been supporting the elimination of forced labour and child labour in Africa for several decades through numerous national, regional and global programmes, including the well-known International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) which, under the label “IPEC+”, is recognized as one of the five ILO flagship programmes. The ILO has initiated the “Alliance 8.7” as an inclusive global partnership committed to achieving Target 8.7 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. At the regional level, the African Union has formulated a 10-year AU action plan for the eradication of child labour, forced labour, human trafficking and modern slavery in Africa (2020-2030), which is being implemented with the support of the ILO. The IPAD2019 is, inter alia, an instrument to support the implementation of the AU action plan at the country and regional levels. Hence, question 7.3 of the IPAD2019 questionnaire sought to identify policies, programmes and laws designed to eliminate forced labour and child labour. This has happened in almost all African countries:

Elimination of child labour and forced labour				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have taken action to eliminate CL and FL	Number of employers’ organizations involved in such action	Number of trade unions involved in such action	ILO support to such action
49	44	25	21	26

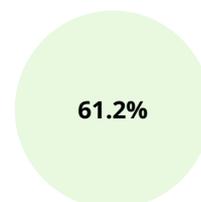
Almost all countries that had completed the questionnaire reported initiatives in the area of forced labour and child labour. This included the revision of labour laws through which the relevant ILO Conventions were domesticated. Numerous countries have designed national plans for the eradication of child labour and/or forced labour; Algeria has established a [National Committee for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons](#) whereas Côte d’Ivoire has set up an [Child Labour Observation and Monitoring System](#). Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Morocco, Nigeria, Tunisia and Uganda have become pathfinder countries of Alliance 8.7. The fight against child labour and forced labour is bolstered by unconditional support from employers’ and workers’ organizations; the ILO offices provide significant support in this area, including through extrabudgetary resources. Often, these initiatives follow up on the guidance provided by the ILO supervisory bodies. However, despite these efforts, the African region has seen an increase in both the number and percentage of children in child labour since 2012. There are now more children in child labour in Africa than in the rest of the world combined (see latest [ILO-UNICEF estimates](#)). In 2021 the CEACR expressed concern at this development in a [general observation concerning Convention No. 182](#).

7.4. Promotion of gender equality and non-discrimination

Gender equality and non-discrimination in the World of Work – the case of Mozambique

The Mozambican Government is revising its labour legislation to bring it in line with the relevant ILO conventions. For example, maternity leave has been increased from 60 to 90 days in the public sector as foreseen in C.183; this now needs to be extended to the private sector and the informal economy, where some 90 per cent of workers are found. Extending maternity protection to all working women including in the informal economy is especially important due to their double burden as mothers and paid workers. The ‘Kiosk Unique for Micro Enterprises and Workers’ KUFMET initiative, launched in November 2021 in Mozambique, supports formalization of workers and economic units in the informal economy. Among its innovations, “one-stop shops” will operate in public markets to facilitate access of informal workers and entrepreneurs to services and information to enable their formalization. The country has also a [national gender policy](#) which includes issues related to the world of work. The social partners are fully involved in these initiatives. The ILO has been building the constituents’ capacity on gender mainstreaming in the world of work, and provides technical assistance for the design of gender strategies for the labour administration and the social security sector.

In the world of work, several challenges remain to the achievement of gender equality. Significant gender gaps exist – and there has been little change over the past 20 years – with respect to both the quantity and quality of jobs: access to employment, equal pay, social security and occupational segregation.



Women are more likely to be unemployed than men, with unemployment particularly affecting young women. Women also continue to be overrepresented in unpaid household and care work, often working longer hours than men when both paid work and unpaid work are taken into account. Advancing gender equality will require addressing these gaps, including the unpaid and undervalued work undertaken by women, redistributing care responsibilities, and ensuring equal remuneration for work of equal value. The Abidjan Declaration places an emphasis on measures for tackling gender inequality and discrimination.

Combating discrimination is an essential part of promoting decent work, and success on this front is felt well beyond the workplace. Issues linked to discrimination are present throughout the ILO’s sphere of work. By bolstering freedom of association, for example, the ILO seeks to prevent discrimination against trade union members and officials and to strengthen the capacity of all workers to defend and assert their rights. Programmes to fight forced labour and child labour include helping girls and women trapped in prostitution or coercive domestic labour. The ILO has, in cooperation with UN Women and the OECD, initiated the

Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC), with the aim to achieve equal pay for work of equal value for women and men everywhere. South Africa, Tunisia and Egypt are active members of the Coalition. With the ILO's support, research on equal pay for work of equal value is ongoing in Senegal, and discussions on pay equity are ongoing within the West African Economic and Monetary Union.

The IPAD2019 noted the persistence of gender gaps within African labour markets, and called for a transformative agenda for gender equality, which acknowledges the relationship between unpaid care work and paid work, recognizes, reduces and redistributes unpaid care work, and rewards and represents care workers. Question 7.4 of the IPAD2019 questionnaire examined the existence of laws, institutions and programmes, designed to achieve gender equality in the world of work:

Existence of gender equality initiatives				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have taken action to promote gender equality	Number of employers' organizations involved in such action	Number of trade unions involved in such action	ILO support to such action
49	31	16	19	15

In the great majority of cases, countries have taken three types of measures to enhance gender equality: (i) the design of national gender equality strategies or plans; (ii) the establishment of Ministries in charge of gender equality, women's affairs or similar denominations; and (iii) the revision of labour and other legislation to enshrine gender equality in national laws. However, many of these initiatives precede the adoption of the Abidjan Declaration, and not all of them are specific to the world of work. Mauritius, South Africa and Zimbabwe have established gender/equal opportunities commissions. The two labour administration centres (ARLAC and CRADAT) have included gender equality in their labour market courses. Among the six RECs that have completed the IPAD2019 questionnaire, five²¹ reported the existence of regional gender equality strategies or plans. At the continental level, the AUC launched in February 2021 the [African Union Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment](#). The employers' and workers' organizations who responded to this question unanimously expressed support for gender equality. Most of the ILO offices that were active in this field focused on the promotion of the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), which has so far been ratified by three African countries (Mauritius, Namibia and Somalia). Zimbabwe has adopted a strategy (2021-2025) for the elimination of sexual harassment and gender based violence at the workplace.

7.5. Women in business and management

This section examines the role of women as entrepreneurs, and as workers and managers in other business ventures. Many women on the African continent operate micro-enterprises in the informal economy, for example as street vendors or marketeers, the vast majority of whom must be classified as survival entrepreneurs who do not earn enough to escape from the vicious circle of poverty. It is therefore necessary design and implement policy solutions and instruments to address barriers faced by women in starting and running viable, growth-oriented businesses. This approach, known as women's entrepreneurship development (WED), has been implemented by the ILO for many years, comprises six strategic components:

- ▶ Entrepreneurship training and support.
- ▶ Business Development Services (BDS) for WED.
- ▶ Enabling ecosystem for WED.
- ▶ Knowledge base on WED.
- ▶ Technical support for project design and implementation.
- ▶ Digital transformation and financial inclusion programmes for WED.

Moreover, ILO programmes such as GET Ahead²² are supporting WED in countries such as Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, the Sudan and Uganda.

▶ Women in Business – the Ugandan experience

The Federation of Ugandan Employers (FUE) runs the "female future programme" to prepare female leaders/executives for top leadership and board appointments. In companies and institutions in which the FUE is represented in board of directors, the federation ensures that both male and female employer representatives are being considered. FUE also promotes the UN Women Empowerment Principles and the Gender Equality Seal. Moreover, Uganda runs a Women Entrepreneur Programme which has benefited 500,000 women so far.

The SDGs also state that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. The SDG 5 on gender equality includes a target 5.5 that seeks to "ensure

²¹ COMESA, ECOWAS, EAC, SADC and ECCAS.

²² Gender and Entrepreneurship Together.

women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.” The associated indicator 5.5.2, for which the ILO serves as a custodian, reads: “Proportion of women in managerial positions”.

Proportion of women in senior or middle-management positions (% of total)								
Angola	2014	18.2	Liberia	2010	21.4	Sierra Leone	2014	27.5
Burkina	2018	24.0	Lesotho	2019	31.7	Seychelles	2020	45.7
Botswana	2020	55.3	Madagascar	2015	31.8	Togo	2017	29.5
Côte d’Ivoire	2017	20.5	Mozambique	2015	22.1	Tunisia	2010	19.3
Egypt	2019	7.1	Mauritius	2019	31.0	United Rep. of Tanzania	2014	17.3
Eswatini	2016	44.0	Namibia	2018	48.2	Uganda	2017	25.4
Ethiopia	2013	21.1	Niger	2017	18.4	South Africa	2020	35.1
Ghana	2017	26.6	Nigeria	2013	31.5	Zambia	2019	30.0
Kenya	2019	49.6	Senegal	2016	15.1	Zimbabwe	2019	28.1

The data in this table is based on the ILO’s statistical database (ILO STAT), as of June 2021; it shows that in general, the proportion of women in senior positions ranges between 20 and 30 per cent, although it is significantly higher in several Southern and Eastern African nations. Most countries for which longitudinal data is available show a modest increase in the relevant indicator, with the exception of Egypt, where the proportion of women in management positions shrank from 13.8 per cent in 2010 to 7.1 per cent in 2019.

Question 7.5 of the IPAD2019 questionnaire was meant to identify measures taken by African constituents to enhance the involvement of women in business and management.

Steps taken to enhance the involvement of women in business and management				
Relevant questionnaires	Countries that have taken relevant action	Number of employers’ organizations involved in such action	Number of trade unions involved in such action	ILO support to such action
49	19	14	8	10

In answering the respective question, many governments referred to general women empowerment projects and strategies, or the existence of ministries, authorities and institutions in charge of women’s affairs and/or gender equality, without stating which action was taken specifically to enhance women’s involvement in business and management. Some countries, such as Burundi, Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau and Mali, have determined quotas (30 or 50 per cent) for the participation of women in public institutions, public initiatives, the national parliament or managerial positions. Uganda implements a Women Entrepreneur Programme to promote participation of women in business; over 500,000 women have already benefited from this programme. Several employers’ organizations report to have taken measures to enhance female participation in business and management, while trade unions generally advocate for greater involvement of women in economic and social affairs. The relatively few ILO activities in this area focus on women’s entrepreneurship training and support. ARLAC states that gender equality is part of its training curriculum while CRADAT stresses that in most courses, the participation of women equals that of men. ECOWAS and EAC have designed regional gender policies while SADC is planning to develop one in the near future. ECCAS has established a gender bureau within its secretariat.

8. COVID-19: Impact and response

The Abidjan Declaration was adopted at a time when the COVID-19 outbreak was still confined to China; the implementation plan was drafted in February 2020, when the pandemic had not yet reached the African continent. This situation, however, deteriorated quickly in the following months, when more and more African countries reported a rising number of Coronavirus infections and deaths. In the aftermath, the virus itself, and the measures to contain its spread, had severe negative effects on all four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda. Employment and incomes in the formal economy and self-employment in the informal economy shrank significantly due to lockdowns, transport restrictions, border closures and interruptions in global supply chains. Social protection systems became overwhelmed with the growing number of patients, and the increasing number of households that required social support since they had lost their income. Social dialogue institutions and processes were disrupted since constituents could no longer meet physically. And finally, human and workers' rights were restricted through measures that curtailed the individuals' and communities' freedom.

In this situation, governments, often with the support of the social partners and the Office, have taken resolute action to attenuate the impact of the pandemic on the labour market, the society and the economy. Some of these initiatives were reported in the questionnaires, and can be categorized as follows:

- ▶ Several countries, including Cameroon, Djibouti, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda and Tunisia carried out studies to assess the impact of COVID-19 on the economy and the labour market; some countries, including Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Senegal and Togo carried out rapid assessments of the impact of COVID-19 on informal economy workers and enterprises.
- ▶ Cabo Verde, Madagascar, Mali and Mozambique developed social protection response plans, while Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi and South Africa elaborated general response strategies, in most cases through tripartite processes.
- ▶ Numerous countries enlarged existing cash transfer programmes, or launched new ones, to support the most vulnerable households; this was reported from Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Egypt, Eswatini, the Gambia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Mali, Namibia, South Africa, Togo, Uganda and Zambia.
- ▶ Countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya and South Africa introduced economic stimulus packages to support enterprises, including those in the informal economy.
- ▶ Some countries, including Benin, Eswatini, Mali, have organized COVID-19-specific training courses for labour inspectors.

Several countries have introduced teleworking arrangements, sometimes using COVID-19 tools developed by the ILO. The Office has during 2020–21 supported the adoption of technology and online-based platforms for delivery of training to ARLAC member states, through the acquisition of state of the art videoconferencing equipment to circumvent COVID-19 travel and meeting restrictions. SADC has established a COVID-19 Dashboard which provides updates on the pandemic in each SADC Member State, in particular with regard to the impact on the labour market in the different SADC countries. The Office prepared a workplace guide on managing COVID-19, and customized it for employer or business membership organisation (EBMOs) in Eswatini, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Malawi, Seychelles, South Africa, Kenya, Namibia United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. In addition, the Office developed "Return to Work" and "Work From Home" guides for EBMOs in the region.

During 2020–21, the ILO, under the auspices of the AU's Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) undertook rapid assessments of the impact of COVID-19 on employment and skills. The report identified practical recommendations for policy and economic recovery interventions and contains comparative findings from Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia. Common skills needs identified in those countries included (i) enhance IT literacy for workers across occupations; (ii) health and safety skills; and (iii) skill sets that enable workers to handle diversified work streams. This is just one example of 'repurposing' policies to address the implications of COVID-19.

The response initiatives above include only those that were reported through the questionnaires. The total number of COVID-19 prevention, control and response measures adopted by African countries is certainly far greater.

9. The Role of Regional Economic Communities

The role and contribution of RECs has been, where appropriate, incorporated under the previous sections. There are, however, a number of action points that are peculiar to RECs as transnational institutions. Those are reviewed under the present section, based on the questionnaires received from five RECs:

The role of RECs in implementing transnational elements of the IPAD2019						
Question	COMESA	ECOWAS	EAC	IGAD ²³	SADC	ECCAS
Does the REC consider mutual skills recognition and cooperation as an important element of regional integration.	The mutual recognition of qualifications and skills is not yet finalized; it will be part of the COMESA Protocol on the Free Movement, which is not yet in force.	ECOWAS ensures the equivalence of certificates and diploma. The ILO has supported the harmonization of skills standards in the construction and agriculture sectors.	The EAC Common Market protocol provides for mutual recognition of academic qualifications. Engineers, accountants, veterinaries have signed Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs).	Recognized as an objective by IGAD.	SADC has adopted the regional qualification framework SADCQF, as well as credit accumulation transfer guidelines. However, mutual recognition agreements are not yet common practice in the region; the next phase of SADCQF will develop minimum standards for professional qualifications to foster the mutual recognition.	ECCAS encourages and supports mutual skills recognition.
Has the REC established or supported regional multilingual skills training institutions that are open to students from all African countries, as called for by the AU TVET strategy.	COMESA, in cooperation with universities in the region (Kenya, Mauritius, and soon Zambia), is offering a Masters in Regional Integration. A regional institution is yet to be developed.	ECOWAS organizes exchange programmes between anglophone and francophone countries, and facilitates the immersion of TVET graduates and internships in key ECOWAS institutions and industries.	In February 2021, the EAC Summit of Heads of States approved the use of French and Kiswahili as additional languages of the EAC. This may be considered a first step towards establishing regional TVET institutions	Not yet, but seen as important since IGAD has Member States with different official languages.	SADC has already established the SADC University of Transformation, yet to be operationalized. It is planned to offer study programmes in English, French and Portuguese.	Not yet.

²³ The IGAD questionnaire was completed by the regional employers' and workers' organizations and by the ILO, but not by the IGAD secretariat.

The role of RECs in implementing transnational elements of the IPAD2019						
Question	COMESA	ECOWAS	EAC	IGAD ²³	SADC	ECCAS
How does the REC contribute to the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).	COMESA has been implementing CAADP; it has also established the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA), which is overseen by the COMESA Division of Industry and Agriculture.	ECOWAS is mandated to implement and domesticate CAADP, for example, by assisting its 15 member States in formulating National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP); ECOWAS supports the CAADP monitoring and implementation framework.	The EAC Treaty provides for cooperation in agriculture and takes cognizance of international and continental practices, including CAADP.		SADC has adapted CAADP through the Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP and its five-year investment plan) . In addition, SADC has developed a Regional Green Economy Strategy and Action Plan .	ECCAS conducts workshops and other activities related to CAADP.
How does the REC foster regional economic integration and joint ventures.	This is the very mandate of COMESA.	The free movement of goods and people and the realization of the customs union came into force on 1 January 2015; moreover, the REC is accelerating the creation of a single currency in the region, and has adopted a regional transport facilitation programme.	EAC fosters regional integration through, for example, the joint production of medical products and supplies. Moreover, partner states can jointly finance projects.	Through investment promotion and subregional strategies and action plans.	The SADC secretariat has set up a SADC-Private Sector Engagement Mechanism with SADC Business council. Moreover, SADC has developed an Investment Policy Framework (IPF) which offers Member States a framework to enhance their investment policies, attract investments and enhance private sector participation, including SMEs.	Regional economic integration is promoted on the basis of the member countries' comparative advantages and specializations: e.g. Gabon in wood processing, Cameroon in agro-industry, and Democratic Republic of the Congo in mining.

The role of RECs in implementing transnational elements of the IPAD2019						
Question	COMESA	ECOWAS	EAC	IGAD ²³	SADC	ECCAS
Which steps have been taken to establish or strengthen workers' and employers' organizations at the level of the REC, and to establish or strengthen regional social dialogue institutions.	Employers are organized under the COMESA Business Council.	ECOWAS has set up a regional Social Dialogue Forum which last met in July 2019. The region also has an Organization of Trade Unions of West Africa (OTUWA), as well as a Federation of West African Employers' Organisations (FOPAO).	The East African Trade Union Confederation (EATUC) and the East African Business Council (EABC) are already operational.	The Horn of Africa Confederation of Trade Unions (HACTU) and the Confederation of IGAD Employers (CIE) have been established with support from the ILO. The Office has also facilitated the creation of a ILO-IGAD labour migration experts reference group, as well as the establishment of an IGAD Ministerial Committee on Labour, Employment and Migration.	SADC has established and Employment and Labour Sector (ELS) in which the governments participate with social partners on an equal footing. The social partners are represented by the SADC Private Sector Forum and the Southern Africa Trade Union Coordinating Council (SATUCC).	Subregional employers' and workers' organizations do not yet exist at ECCAS level, but will hopefully emerge in the future.
Has the free movement of persons within the region covered by the REC been secured?	The COMESA Protocol on Free Movement was adopted by Member States and has so far been ratified by four Member States.	ECOWAS has adopted the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocols since 1979 and currently on the second phase of implementation of the protocols.	Art. 7 of the EAC Common Market Protocol provides for free movement of persons.	IGAD has, with ILO support, adopted bilateral labour agreements among IGAD member States. Moreover, IGAD has adopted in 2021 a Protocol on the free movement of persons.	SADC has adopted the Protocol on Facilitation of Movement of Persons in 2005, but it has not yet entered into force. Currently, Member States have concluded bilateral agreements to facilitate measures that include visa exemptions and the right of entry.	Since January 2020, the free movement of persons is effective in all ECCAS member states. The single travel document (ECCAS passport) is awaiting validation.

As can be concluded from this table, impressive progress has been achieved by the six RECs that responded to the questionnaire. The ILO has concluded memorandums of understandings with most African RECs, and maintains close cooperation with their secretariats. It is especially encouraging to note that regional employers' and workers' organizations, and in some cases, even regional social dialogue structures, have been put in place at the level of RECs. This ensures that the principle of tripartism is applied at the regional level as well.

10. Continental level

As was the case with the RECs, the role and contribution of the African Union Commission and of the continental employers' and workers' organizations has been, where appropriate, incorporated under the previous sections. In addition, there are several action areas that can only be addressed at the continental level. Those are reviewed under the present section:

Role of African continental institutions and social partners in addressing relevant action areas of the IPAD2019				
Action area	African Union Commission	Business Africa	ITUC Africa ²⁴	ILO Regional Office for Africa
Does the AUC consider mutual skills recognition and cooperation as an important element of regional integration?	The AU is in the process of developing an African continental qualification Framework (ACQF) which will contribute to mutual recognition of qualifications and improve workforce mobility throughout the continent. ²⁵		Supports mutual skills recognition through advocacy.	Provides technical support for the design of the ACQF, and carries out research on labour mobility in the leather sector.
Which steps have been taken by the AUC and its partners to operationalize and implement the AU TVET strategy ?	The AUC has designed a TVET Decade Plan of Action 2019-2028, and has launched a Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) to enhance skills development and employment prospects for youth. The AUC has also strengthened the capacity of RECs and national authorities for labour market forecasts and skills-need anticipation systems, and carried out various training programmes.	Business Africa has been involved in the Skills for Africa continental program, and piloted skilling programmes targeting TVET level skills in Kenya and Uganda.	ITUC-Africa is working with non-state partners to operationalize the AU TVET strategy, for instance through a partnership with an Italian NGO to advance TVET in fragile states such as in Somalia and Eritrea.	The ILO organized a training programme on anticipation and matching of labour market skill needs, as well as other, skills-related training courses.

²⁴ The second continental trade union confederation, i.e., the Organization for African Trade Union Unity (OATUU), did not complete the questionnaire.

²⁵ The ACQF shall: (i) enhance Comparability, quality and transparency of qualifications, from all sub sectors and level of education and training and support people's lifelong learning outcome; (ii) facilitate recognition of diplomas and certificate; (iii) work in complementarity with national and regional qualifications framework and support the creation of a common African education space; and (iv) promote cooperation and alignment between qualifications frameworks in Africa and worldwide.

Role of African continental institutions and social partners in addressing relevant action areas of the IPAD2019				
Action area	African Union Commission	Business Africa	ITUC Africa ²⁴	ILO Regional Office for Africa
Which progress has been made in Implementing the AU-ILO continental programme “Decent Work for Transformation of the Informal Economy in Africa”?	This area is included in the joint operational plan concluded between the AUC and the ILO. This includes the establishment of an Informal Economy Knowledge Hub which was launched in July 2021.		ITUC Africa issued a call for a New Social Contract for Recovery and Resilience (post-COVID 19), and will take part in an ILO–UNDP virtual conference informal economy in Nov 2021.	ILO ROAF finances various studies related to informality, and has carried out rapid assessments on levels of organizing among IE actors. A focus will be laid on increasing productivity and digitization among MSM, and the support to the design of national formalization action plans.
Did the AUC and its partners formulate and implement a continental programme on the Blue Economy in African Island States.	The AUC has developed an African Blue Economy Strategy (ABES) whose implementation started in August 2021 with the support from the Norwegian Government.		Strong support from the trade unions for this topic.	
Which progress has been made in operationalizing the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and in promoting the free movement of persons throughout the AU?	The AfCFTA was operationalized in 2019 and trading under the AfCFTA regime started on 1st January 2021. So far the AfCFTA has been ratified by 40 Member States.	Business Africa developed a report on continental policy issues that are of priorities for employers’ organizations including opportunities for their role in ACFTA.	The ITUC-Africa seeks to influence ACFTA to ensure that decent work, social justice and labour and human rights are prioritized, so that trade liberalization does not have negative consequences on jobs. A Trade Union Guide to the ACFTA in English and French is under preparation.	ILO provides technical support to formulation of the AU declaration and BLA guidelines.
Which steps have been taken to strengthen and expand the Pan-African Productivity Association (PAPA)?	The AUC has facilitated the establishment of the Pan-African Manufacturers Association, which consider productivity in the manufacturing industry.			Financial support to PAPA for activities in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Role of African continental institutions and social partners in addressing relevant action areas of the IPAD2019				
Action area	African Union Commission	Business Africa	ITUC Africa ²⁴	ILO Regional Office for Africa
Which measures have been taken to strengthen the capacity of regional workers' and employers' organizations to implement the Abidjan Declaration.	Establishment of the Labour Migration Advisory Committee (LMAC) in which continental social partners are represented. LMAC undertook advisory missions to different RECs, and organized various webinars related to labour migration.	Business Africa has designed a programme of social partners for the implementation of the Abidjan Declaration.	Work has been done at the thematic level, such as youth employment, involvement of trade unions in the formulation UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, economic recovery after COVID-19, and others.	Technical and financial support to the activities mentioned under AUC.
Has the AU STC tripartite structure and capacity been strengthened in promoting social dialogue through technical assistance?			Not within the AU STC, but ITUC-AFRICA undertook initiatives to strengthen the capacities of national trade union centres to negotiate with governments in combating COVID-19 and in designing post-COVID-19 recovery processes.	
Has the participation of youth, disabled persons and informal economy organizations as observers to the AU STC-SDLE been secured.	Not directly, only through the existing continental social partners.		ITUC-Africa cooperates with StreetNet, a global organization of street vendors.	
Which activities have been undertaken at continental level during the reporting period under the AU "Social protection plan for the informal economy and rural workers" (SPIREWORK)?	AUC organized in April 2021 a virtual regional dialogue on the extension of social security to the informal economy and financing options for accelerating social protection coverage in Africa, as well as a virtual meeting of Social Security Institutions on a continental cooperation and coordination mechanism on social security.		The ITUC-Africa conducted numerous activities related to the action area, such as a regional digital academy on social protection response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and a study of "the state of Africa's informal workers during COVID-19: A synthesis of evidence and implications for social protection.	Financial and technical support to the AUC activities, as well as additional activities under the regional project "Extending social protection access and portability of benefits to Migrant Workers and their families in Selected RECs in Africa."

Role of African continental institutions and social partners in addressing relevant action areas of the IPAD2019				
Action area	African Union Commission	Business Africa	ITUC Africa ²⁴	ILO Regional Office for Africa
Has the AU-UNECA- IOM-ILO joint labour migration programme been continued and expanded during the reporting period?	The JLMP has been extended until 2024 with funding from SDC (Switzerland) and SIDA (Sweden). Moreover, the AU has in 2021 adopted a Declaration on the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers, and elaborated AU Bilateral Agreement (BLA) Guidelines.	Business Africa has designed a programme on labour migration governance.	ITUC Africa participated in the implementation of the JLMP.	The ILO has carried out under the JLMP an assessment of existing labour legislations and policies in selected RECs and Member States, and produced a pamphlet on migrant workers and labour standards.
Does the AU STC-SDLE facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experience on international labour standard supervision and reporting?		Business Africa received ILO support to implement its strategic plan and enhance member engagement to ensure that the employers' organizations across Africa are engaged in the various continental policy discussions, declarations and initiatives, including ILO standards.	ITUC-Africa actively supported the promotion of certain standards, such as P.29 and C.182, and followed up on the decisions of ILO's supervisory bodies.	

Role of African continental institutions and social partners in addressing relevant action areas of the IPAD2019				
Action area	African Union Commission	Business Africa	ITUC Africa ²⁴	ILO Regional Office for Africa
Which steps have been taken during the reporting period to implement the AU action plan on forced labour and child labour.	<p>The AU organized in March 2021 the Africa launch of the International Year on the Elimination of child labour, and several AU Commissioners committed to mainstream child labour in their action plans and STCs. The AU also organized in June 2021 an event to mark the world day against child labour in Africa.</p> <p>The African Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) and civil society and the diaspora (CIDO) are conducting a survey on the level of awareness about child labour.</p>	Business Africa participated in the two AUC events.	ITUC-Africa participated in the two AUC events.	ILO supported the AUC activities, including through the ACCEL-Africa project on accelerating progress towards the elimination of child labour in supply chains in Africa.

The table above is based on information provided by ITUC-Africa and the ILO Regional Office for Africa, plus implementation reports prepared by Business Africa (not focusing on the implementation plan specifically).

Conclusions and Recommendations

This mid-term review of the Implementation Plan covers the period December 2019 to September 2021, that is, 22 months. During that period, and based on the questionnaires received, activities related to the 37 action-areas (grouped into seven work areas) have taken place in **58.5 per cent** of the countries that have completed the IPAD2019 questionnaire (49 out of 54 African nations,²⁶ with a lower response rate by employers' organizations (37 out of 54) and workers' organizations (31 out of 54). As was to be expected, the rate of achievement varies from action-area to action-area and work area to work area; the highest score, with 89.8 per cent each, was recorded in the action-areas "ratification of fundamental conventions" (section 7.2) and "fight against child labour and forced labour" (section 7.3), while the promotion of the MNE Declaration yielded, with 16.3 per cent, the lowest rate of achievement. As this mid-term review covers just 22 of the 48 months of the Abidjan Declaration's duration, the overall rate of achievement can be considered satisfactory. As mentioned earlier, not all the activities reported by the constituents were initiated *because* of the IPAD2019, and many of those activities began *prior* to the adoption of the Abidjan Declaration, hence it would be presumptuous to attribute the progress summarized in this report solely to the existence of the Implementation Plan and its underlying Declaration. But it is safe to assume that the continuous process of advocacy and dialogue among and between constituents, with or without the participation of the Office, has greatly facilitated the realization of the action-areas foreseen in the IPAD2019. For example, during the neoliberal era of the 1980s and 1990s, when almost all African countries had to undergo a process of 'structural adjustment', employment creation received little attention since it was widely believed that economic growth would create jobs automatically. This changed with the Ouagadougou Summit of 2004 (see section 1.1); this Summit, and the successive ILO Africa Regional Meetings that took place thereafter, called for the systematic mainstreaming of employment in all national policies, which is now being the case in 87.2 per cent of the countries that have responded to the questionnaire. Similarly, the high rate of achievement in the area of child labour and forced labour has been, in all likelihood, supported by a longstanding, quite substantial ILO development cooperation portfolio around these concerns in Africa. The same is true with regard to social dialogue institutions: 47 out of 54 African nations have ratified the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), and almost all African countries have established national social dialogue institutions.

Rate of achievement by work area		
	Work area	Rate of achievement
1	Decent jobs for Africa, in particular for young women and men	66.9%
2	Skills and technology	56.3%
3	Inclusive transformation for decent work in the informal and rural economy	38.1%
4	A Conducive Environment for Sustainable enterprises	40.0%
5	Tripartism and social dialogue	60.2%
6	Social Protection and labour protection for all	64.8%
7	Labour standards and gender equality	79.0%
Overall		58.5%

Several constituents stressed the importance of DWCPs for the planning and monitoring of ILO-related activities in their countries. The design of a DWCP is a capacity-building exercise in itself and should be generalized throughout the region.

Employers' and workers' organizations often responded that they were closely involved in policy formulation and the drafting of relevant laws, but some deplored a lack of information, consultation and involvement, pinpointing room for improvement in this area. This notwithstanding, social dialogue, as mentioned above, appears to perform highly satisfactorily in the region.

Two action areas were marked as red, namely the enhancement of knowledge about productivity, and the promotion of the MNE Declaration. To address these shortcomings a concerted effort by the constituents and the Office would be desirable. Moreover, seven action areas were classified as "yellow":

- ▶ Ratification and application of the Employment Policy Convention No. 122.
- ▶ Formalization of the informal economy.

²⁶ No Governments response was received from: Angola, Egypt, Eritrea, Libya and Niger. In the case of Egypt, a response was received from the employers only, not from governments, and in the case of Niger, the ILO office responded, but not the constituents.

- ▶ The promotion of rural employment.
- ▶ The formulation of green jobs strategies and programmes.
- ▶ The establishment of productivity centres.
- ▶ The interaction between informal economy actors and the social partners.
- ▶ The leadership role of women in business and management.

This observation calls for renewed attention by the constituents and the Office to these action areas.

The completed questionnaires at the subregional level underline the important role that RECs are playing not only in fostering regional integration and the free movement of persons, but also with regard to regional social dialogue and the establishment of regional workers' and employers' organizations, the formulation of regional, Decent Work-related policies, the portability of social protection benefits, and the mutual recognition of acquired. Several RECs have formulated regional Decent Work Programmes (R-DWP), an initiative which deserves to be generalized throughout the African region.

At the continental level, the AUC has, often with ILO support and in consultation with the continental employers' and workers' organizations, adopted numerous continental frameworks and strategies on free trade, skills recognition, the informal economy, the blue economy, gender equality, labour migration, the extension of social protection, and other areas, all of which are in various stages of implementation. All of those areas are closely related to the IPAD2019.

Each of the 37 action areas offer considerable potential for South–South cooperation among and between African countries and constituents. Surely, joint cross-border activities involving ILO constituents are already taking place without the Office necessarily being aware. But a more systematic approach towards the expansion of [South–South Cooperation for Decent Work in Africa](#) would be welcome.

In conclusion, the present report provides evidence of the strong commitment of ILO's constituents at national, regional and continental level in Africa to the Organization's overarching goals of decent work, social justice, sustainable development and a human-centred future of work. This provides a sound basis of the full implementation of the Abidjan Declaration until the 15th African Regional Meeting will take stock of the Declaration's achievements.