

AFRICAN CONTINENTAL TVET STRATEGY 2025-34

Sustainable Development,
Social Justice and
Employability for All

Foreword



As the African Union advances its collective agenda for sustainable development, it becomes increasingly evident that the path to prosperity lies in the hands of a skilled and empowered workforce. The African Continental TVET Strategy (CTVET) 2025-34 for Sustainable Development, Social Justice and Employability for All represents a transformative blueprint designed to harness the immense potential of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) systems across Africa. It is a demonstration of the African Union's solid commitment to equipping our people, especially the youth, women and vulnerable groups, with the skills needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving global economy and world of work.

The strategy aligns with the aspirations of Agenda 2063, The Africa We Want, and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, reflecting a shared vision of inclusive growth, equitable opportunities and innovation-driven progress. It builds on lessons learned from the previous TVET strategy, incorporating the invaluable insights of diverse stakeholders, from government representatives and development partners to private sector partners, training institutions, civil society and youth.

In an era marked by unprecedented transformation in areas that include, among others, digitalisation, climate change, geopolitical tensions and demographic shifts, the TVET ecosystem must adapt swiftly to prepare for the challenges and opportunities ahead. This CTVET 2025-34 strategy prioritises aligning TVET strategy with development strategies and socioeconomic policies, strengthening partnerships for co-creation and knowledge sharing and striving for values-based excellence in TVET as critical in transforming TVET systems. It emphasises policy, governance and financing; quality and inclusion; partnerships knowledge and resource sharing; and institutional development technology and innovation as foundational pillars for achieving sustainable development, social justice and employability for all.

I call upon Member States, regional economic communities, development partners and all stakeholders to rally behind and promote implementation of this strategy. Together, we must champion the integration of TVET into national development frameworks, foster cross-border collaboration and mobilise resources to realise the vision of a prosperous, integrated and peaceful Africa.

Let this strategy serve as a guiding light, steering our collective efforts towards an empowered African workforce that contributes not only to the growth of individual nations but also to the realisation of a globally competitive and dynamic continent. By advancing TVET, we invest in the future of Africa – a future defined by opportunity, resilience and shared success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Belhocine'.

H.E. Prof. Mohammed Belhocine
Commissioner for Education, Science,
Technology and Innovation African Union
Commission

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Prof Mohammed Belhocine, Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, African Union Commission, (2021 – 2025)





Prof Saidou Madougou, Director for Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation,
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Chapter 1: Introduction

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

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

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

- ✓ Skills mismatch, a key challenge. Often, the skills of youth graduating from TVET do not meet the labour market's demands
- ✓ Weak institutional capacity and fragmentation in the governance of TVET
- ✓ Inadequate financing, and lack of quality assurance mechanisms in the TVET ecosystem
- ✓ Lack of systematic involvement of employers' and workers' organisations at all levels of TVET, including for policy-making
- ✓ Lack of skills anticipation and forecasting to take account of emerging trends that influence the world of work, such as digitalisation, including AI, energy transition and climate change
- ✓ Uneven distribution of TVET centres, which are mainly located in urban centres
- ✓ Inadequate attention to the skills development needs of the informal economy despite the fact that 84.8% of employment in Africa is in the informal economy (ILO, 2023c).
- ✓ Low women's participation in TVET,



specifically in areas involving science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects

- ✓ The low perception of TVET leads to reluctance among students to enrol
- ✓ Inadequate supply of competent TVET trainers, experts and managers
- ✓ Low foundational skills and educational attainment of candidates seeking admission to TVET programmes
- ✓ Weak integration of core work and entrepreneurial skills
- ✓ Obsolete training infrastructure and curricula
- ✓ Limited opportunities for TVET trainees to access quality on-the-job practical experience for enhanced employability
- ✓ Lack of institutionalised information systems that would provide timely, reliable information about skills supply and demand

The commission recommended that the next CTVET strategy be closely aligned with the aspirations of Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other pivotal regional and global frameworks. Considering the

significant impact of four predominant trends – digitalisation, climate change, demographic shifts and migration – on labour markets, it becomes imperative for TVET systems to adopt proactive measures to use opportunities and address challenges. These trends must be key considerations in the new CTVET strategy.

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

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



1.2 Focus of the new strategy

While the previous strategy was primarily focused on enhancing youth employability, the revised one takes a holistic view of TVET in promoting the employability of all women and men, including vulnerable groups of people, and supporting the vision¹ of the African Union. This shift in focus is crucial in promoting lifelong learning for all people in the face of the labour markets' rapidly changing skills needs, influenced by mega drivers such as technological advancements, climate shifts, demographic changes and migration, as discussed in the subsequent sections, and in ensuring no one is left behind. The role of TVET in promoting social inclusion, particularly by addressing the needs of vulnerable groups, such as those in the informal and rural economy, migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and those who are internally displaced, and people with disabilities, is also of the utmost importance.

TVET plays a vital role, contributing to sustainable development and social justice, in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals² and the AU Agenda 2063 and its objectives and goals, especially Aspirations 1 and 3 of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (FTYIP). Therefore, the new strategy is well aligned with the AUC's social and economic agenda and acknowledges the need for blended work (remote and hybrid work), well-being, mental health, equity, inclusion and lifelong learning. The new TVET strategy focuses on transforming TVET through close alignment with the broader development agenda of the African Union, value-based excellence,

partnerships with the productive sector³, innovation, co-creation and resource sharing between Member States and beyond.

1.3 Importance of skills in the development frameworks.

Transforming TVET in Africa requires close alignment with the AU's key priorities highlighted in continental and global strategic development frameworks. This section analyses the role of skills envisaged in the Agenda 2063, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the AU's Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025 (CESA), the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the AU-ILO Youth Employment Strategy for Africa (YES-Africa)⁴.

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

¹ An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena.

² Especially SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), and SDG 10 (reduced inequalities).

³ The term productive sector covers both public and private sectors including social and solidarity organisations. In Africa, the public sector plays a crucial role in job creation and employment promotion, so using the term productive sector is better compared to the private sector.

⁴ Adopted by the STC on Social Development, Labour and Employment in July 2024.

high-quality TVET centres, and fostering more significant links with industry and alignment to labour markets.

The AfCFTA, as one of the flagship projects of Agenda 2063, aims to boost intra-continental “trade in value-added,” across all sectors of Africa’s economy. The success of this ambition depends, among others, on the capabilities of Africa’s workforce to engage in higher-value-added activities. In addition, the equitable distribution of the gains from trade and investment depends on the absorptive capacity of enterprises operating in the Member States. Therefore, the strengthening of TVET and the acquisition of relevant skills are important considerations.

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

STISA acknowledges the pivotal role of technical competencies and the importance of TVET in opening career paths. It underscores the potential of science, technology and innovation in supporting sustainable socio-economic growth and development of the continent, with TVET playing a crucial role in realising this potential.

YES-Africa addresses the current state of poor responsiveness of skills development systems to the labour market needs as a significant bottleneck hindering youth employment promotion. The strategy’s priority area 5 focuses on skills development and economic empowerment to tackle youth employment challenges, recommending actions such as developing skills intelligence; increasing budget allocation for education and training; productive sector involvement in skills development; promotion of work-based learning; including quality apprenticeships⁵; reskilling and upskilling initiatives; and cross-border skills recognition.

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



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



1.4 Mega transformations affecting jobs and skills in Africa



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



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



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



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



On the demand side, the continent continues to struggle with so-called "jobless growth," with limited success in translating economic growth into decent job creation. The growth is primarily driven by relatively less labour-intensive sectors, such as extractives, rather than manufacturing. In many African countries, the share of manufacturing-related employment is below 5%, limiting African economies' capacity to employ their people in formal, decent jobs. Meanwhile, many workers are confined to low-productivity, labour-intensive sectors such as agriculture and retail trade, which are often highly informal. As a result, the vast majority – around 85% – of the continent's workers are in the informal economy,



making little contribution to value addition and productivity improvement. Technology-led transformations are therefore needed to attract people to sustainable innovative practices such as precision agriculture and biotechnology, and to invest in the emerging green, digital, blue and orange economies.



Slow structural transformation means there are not enough decent work opportunities for the increasingly educated African workforce. This is a factor that leads to educated workers emigrating, resulting in a brain drain. A considerable proportion – 17% – of tertiary-educated adults born in Africa live abroad, mostly in high-income countries abroad. Digital transformation is already reshaping the continent's labour market, with significant prospects for job creation and many implications for digital skills. By 2030, 70% of jobs will require basic digital skills, such as mobile communication abilities, and 23% will require intermediate digital skills, especially in the services sector. The demand for digital skills will also emerge at advanced level as many African firms adopt advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence.





Chapter 2: Transforming TVET in Africa

With labour markets' skills needs rapidly changing as a result of the impact of mega drivers such as technological developments and climate change, TVET systems must be dynamic and responsive to realise the AU's vision as enshrined in the Agenda 2063. The new CTVET Strategy⁶ is a crucial and promising step in this direction. It focuses on recommendations for transforming national TVET systems to make them high quality, efficient and responsive to the needs of African people, productive sectors and fast-changing labour markets. The strategy contributes to efforts to achieve the AU's vision, Agenda 2063 and the United Nations' SDGs.

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

2.1 Vision of the African Union

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

2.2 Mission of the Continental TVET Strategy

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

2.3 Strategic objectives

The two strategic objectives of the African Continental TVET Strategy 2025-34 are:

- ✓ To guide Member States on developing and implementing transformative, relevant and inclusive national TVET policy and systems, contributing to sustainable development, economic growth, social justice, enhanced employability and productivity in Africa

- ✓ To guide the African Union and its institutions and organs, including RECs, regional mechanisms, AUDA-NEPAD, Member States and partners in implementing the strategy

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

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

1. Policy, governance and finance
2. Quality and inclusion
3. Partnerships, knowledge and resource sharing
4. Institutional development, technology and innovation

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

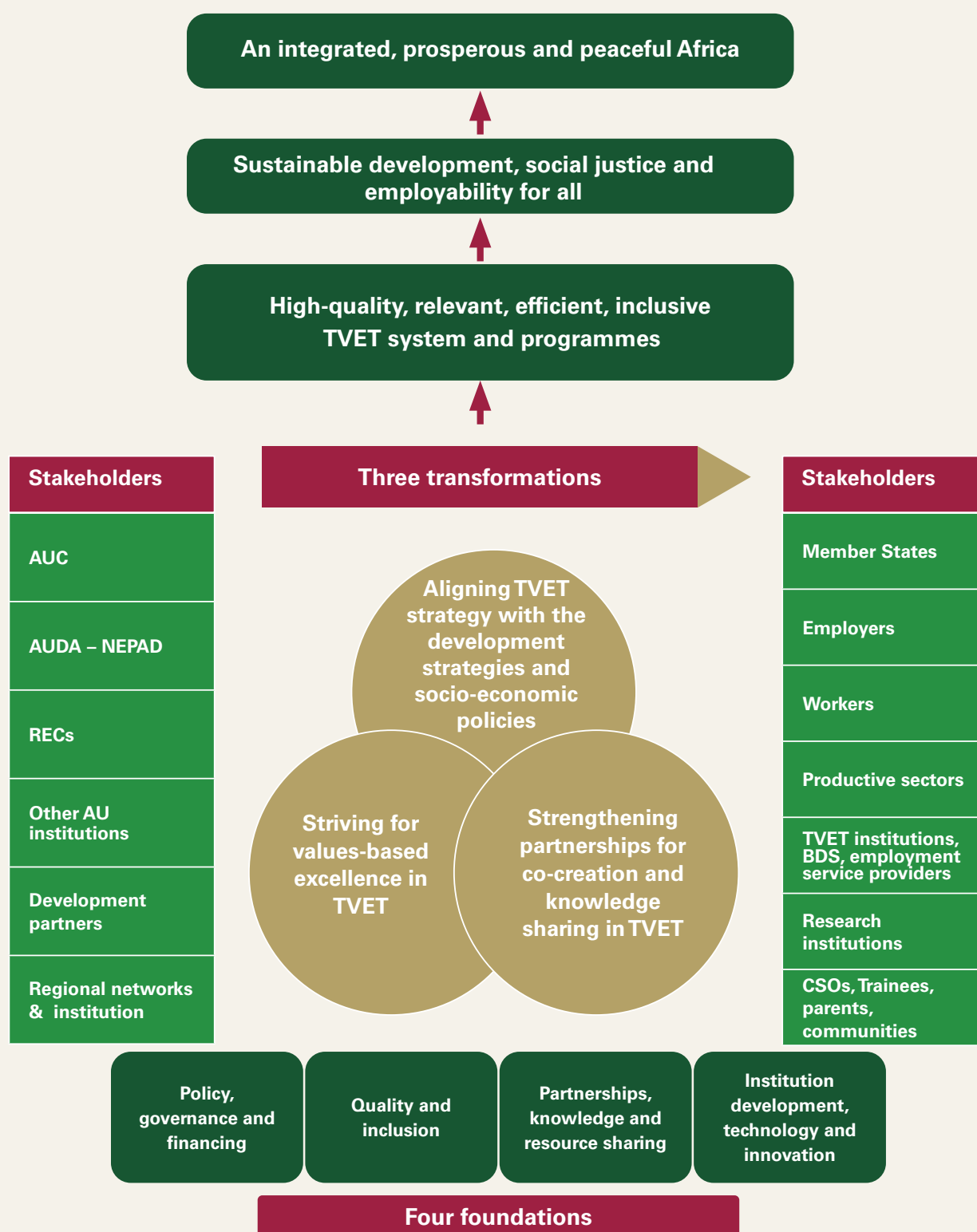
2.4 Guiding principles for transforming TVET

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

1. Aligning TVET strategy with development strategies and socio-economic policies
2. Striving for values-based excellence in TVET
3. Strengthening partnerships for co-creation and knowledge sharing in TVET

⁶ This strategy has benefitted from a thorough review process, including the evaluation of the Continental TVET Strategy for Africa adopted in 2015, input from a multistakeholder drafting committee, task team and Member States, and extensive review of literature, strategies and recommendations on TVET from esteemed organisations such as the African Union and its organs, the African Development Bank, the International Labour Organization, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, UNESCO, the World Bank, Commonwealth of Learning, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the European Commission. These documents are listed in the bibliography.

Figure 1: TTVET for lifelong employability for all contributing to sustainable development and social justice in Africa⁷



⁷ Sources: Based on the suggestions of the drafting committee for this strategy, World Bank, ILO & UNESCO (2023); AfDB & ILO (2023). Civil society organisations.



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

Skills development is not an end in itself; it's a key driver of decent work, productivity, competitiveness, inclusive sustainable growth and personal development. To realise these objectives, it is of utmost importance that the TVET strategy is aligned with the development strategy and socioeconomic, environmental, industrial, trade, technology, energy, sectoral, education and labour-market policies. This alignment is not just a recommendation, but a crucial step towards achieving national development goals. It aligns training with the needs of the productive sector and aspirations of people, enhances the outcome of TVET programmes and fosters sustainable development.

Given the significant presence of large informal economies, including rural sectors, in most African countries, addressing their needs is essential. These needs are often overlooked by formal TVET systems, making it the responsibility of Member States to ensure inclusivity in national strategies.

Furthermore, TVET strategies should leverage sectoral approaches that align with national and regional priority sectors, supporting the fourth industrial revolution (Industry 4.0) and economic diversification, for example from the extractive and agriculture sectors to the manufacturing sector. This sector-specific focus

will ensure that TVET programmes are relevant and responds to the demands of the current and future labour market, particularly in sectors and industries critical for economic development.

2.4.2 Striving for values-based excellence in TVET

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

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

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

2.4.3 Strengthening partnerships for co-creation and knowledge sharing in TVET

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

These partnerships should operate on multiple levels:

- ✓ **Integration with social partners and productive sectors:** Establish partnerships with social partners and the productive sector at all stages of TVET, from policy formulation and programme development to implementation and evaluation. A key emphasis should be on promoting work-

based learning opportunities and school-to-work transition programmes for all trainees

- ✓ **Regional cooperation:** Foster collaborations among African countries, regulatory and research institutions, and centres of excellence through AUC, RECs and other regional bodies and networks to harmonise efforts
- ✓ **South-South and triangular cooperation:** Encourage South-South exchanges and triangular cooperation to leverage expertise and innovative solutions among developed and developing nations
- ✓ **Engagement with development partners and UN agencies:** Strengthen ties with development partners and UN agencies to access additional resources, technical expertise and global good practices

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





Chapter 3: Strengthening foundations for TVET development in Africa

3.1 Policy, governance and finance

This chapter recommends specific measures to Member States to strengthen four complementary, mutually reinforcing foundations for promoting an effective TVET system contributing to sustainable development⁸, social justice, employability and productivity in Africa.

3.1.1 Policy, governance and finance

Member States should:

- a) Develop and implement a national TVET policy aligned with the Continental TVET Strategy, national development strategy and relevant policies⁹
- b) Develop an enabling environment for the participation of representatives of all relevant stakeholders¹⁰ through social dialogue in the development and implementation of TVET policies and programmes
- c) Ensure that TVET policies promote a culture of lifelong learning, allowing individuals to upgrade their skills through reskilling and upskilling throughout their careers

- d) Develop policies based on robust evidence, reflecting information from the assessment of labour market trends and monitoring and evaluation system
- e) Ensure that TVET policies prioritise the improvement of skills development and recognition in the informal economy
- f) Demonstrate high-level commitment to TVET by including it as a strategic component in national development strategies and policies, setting national goals, introducing legislative support and allocating adequate resources

3.1.2 Governance

Member States should:

- a) Establish effective coordination mechanisms founded on social dialogue at various levels – at the national level to promote interministerial coordination and policy coherence; at the sectoral level for sharing information about skills demands and supply to improve planning and the delivery of training; at the local level for aligning training

⁸ For achieving sustainable development, it is crucial to harmonise three core elements: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. These elements are interconnected, and all are crucial for the well-being of individuals and societies.

⁹ These include economic, education, industrial, trade, science and technology, ICT and AI, and environmental policies, including just transition and climate action plans, and social protection, active labour market and sectoral policies.

¹⁰ Stakeholders include employers' and workers' organisations, associations of productive sectors, TVET authorities and providers, employment services, informal sector associations, civil society, development partners and trainers.

to the needs of the local labour market; and at the regional level for promoting recognition of skills, labour mobility and knowledge sharing

- b)** Establish or designate one or more public authorities responsible for regulating TVET, in which all crucial stakeholders, including employers' and workers' organisations, are represented
- c)** Ensure that the competent authorities established in (b) above have clearly defined responsibilities, are adequately funded and work in close cooperation with other authorities or institutions responsible for regulating or delivering education and training, labour inspection, social protection, occupational safety and health, and public and private employment services
- d)** Support the establishment of sector skills bodies¹¹ in the priority sectors to match the demand for skills with training provision, analyse and anticipate labour market and skill needs, and assess the quality and relevance of training programmes
- e)** Create an enabling environment that fosters the provision of high-quality TVET by stakeholders such as the public and private sectors, non-profit organisations and industry
- f)** Strengthen public TVET institutions by granting autonomy, engaging representatives

of local industry, including employers' and workers' organisations, community, staff and trainees in its governance, and boosting capacity to improve their performance and accountability

3.1.3 Financing

Member States should:

- a)** Establish sustainable funding for TVET through mobilising resources from diverse sources¹² and using innovative financing mechanisms¹³;
- b)** Encourage contributions from the productive sector through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, industry partnerships, direct investments in TVET institutions and programmes, and work-based learning
- c)** Take measures to benchmark the cost of TVET programmes and improve efficiency by optimising the use of facilities and resources
- d)** Provide grants, targeted subsidies and incentives to ensure access and affordability for all trainees, particularly women, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups
- e)** Provide targeted incentives and support services to micro and small enterprises to offer work-based learning
- f)** Prioritise investment in skills training for emerging occupations



¹¹ Sector skills bodies is a broader term that includes autonomous councils and advisory committees.

¹² such as government, productive sector, multilateral and bilateral development partners, international NGOs, philanthropic organisations, community, trainees and alumni.

¹³ such as education bonds, levies, crowd funding and impact financing.



3.1.4 Monitoring and evaluation

Member States should:

- a) Mandate the regulatory body to develop a monitoring and evaluation system, including performance indicators and ratings for TVET institutions and programmes
- b) Take measures to regularly monitor and evaluate TVET systems, institutions, training providers and programmes, including apprenticeships, to review their effectiveness, efficiency and inclusiveness
- c) Establish a standardised data-collection system for TVET, enabling reliable comparisons across countries
- d) Pay specific attention to the impact of TVET on the economic self-reliance of vulnerable groups, particularly women, people with disabilities and forcibly displaced people
- e) Use information from the monitoring and evaluation system to regularly review and improve TVET policies, systems and programmes

3.1.5 Awareness and advocacy

Member States should:

- a) Motivate productive sector leaders to champion TVET, raising its profile and highlighting its importance for national economic growth, competitiveness, productivity and social development, and fostering the growth of emerging sectors such as the digital, green, blue, orange and care economies

- b) Implement awareness campaigns, leverage media and promote role models to showcase success stories to promote the image and attractiveness of TVET to the trainees, parents, community and employers' and workers' organisations
- c) Raise awareness about the benefits and processes related to recognition of prior learning (RPL) among employers' and workers' organisations and communities, especially informal-economy workers and rural communities

3.2 Quality and Inclusion

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

3.2.1 Skills intelligence

Member States should:

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



emerging sectors¹⁹ and relevant occupations, and regularly update them

- l)** Develop higher-level TVET programmes within qualification frameworks or systems in partnership with universities to address sector-specific needs
- m)** Ensure professional development, decent working condition and career-progression opportunities for teacher entices and interns receive high-quality workplace training, adequate remuneration and decent working conditions in accordance with national law and context
- o)** Support the active participation of private training providers, while ensuring quality standards and social inclusion

3.2.3 Social inclusion

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

3.2.3.1 Women and vulnerable groups

Member States should:

- a)** Implement targeted measures, including

subsidies and financial incentives, to promote gender equality and social inclusion in TVET and access to employment

- b)** Take effective measures to prevent and eliminate any discrimination, violence and harassment and exploitation of trainees and staff within the training eco-system
- c)** Ensure TVET infrastructure, including buildings and transport, are accessible, as well as information
- d)** Promote reskilling and upskilling opportunities tailored to the needs of women, adults and vulnerable groups
- e)** Have a focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education for women and vulnerable groups, and break gender stereotypes
- f)** Establish needs-based second-chance education, bridging and pre-apprenticeship programmes, with a focus on increasing participation, retention and TVET success rates
- g)** Offer personalised, adaptive and flexible learning opportunities, including through digital technology, for adults and vulnerable groups

3.2.3.2 Migrants and refugees

Member States should:

¹⁹ Emerging economic sectors align with a country's development strategy to drive job-rich growth through diversification and transformation. These may include manufacturing, digital, green, blue and orange industries.



- a) Develop and implement agreements²⁰ and frameworks for the mutual recognition of TVET qualifications and skills across countries to facilitate fair and mutually beneficial migration or skills mobility between countries, including through the introduction of an “Africa skills passport”
- b) Provide support for returning migrants, including through the recognition of skills gained abroad, and providing skilling or upskilling to facilitate reintegration into the local labour market. Wherever possible, they should also offer joint training for refugees and host communities to foster social cohesion
- c) Enable forcibly displaced and stateless persons equal access to TVET
- d) Develop systems for sharing information on skills gaps and migration among African countries

3.2.3.3 Informal economy

Member States should:

- a) Strengthen the capacity of associations of small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs), including through financial support, to improve the quality of apprenticeships
- b) Strengthen the capacity of SMMEs by improving access to business development and financial services, enhancing occupational

safety and health, and advancing teaching, training methods and the technical and entrepreneurial skills of master craftspersons

- c) Ensure that apprentices have access to off-the-job training and may complement their on-the-job learning in other enterprises or through intermediaries, where appropriate
- d) Recognise prior learning to establish the existing skills possessed by candidates, including apprentices, and encourage the provision of reskilling and upskilling courses to bridge the skills gap
- e) Provide subsidies and incentives to workers in the informal economy for skilling, upskilling and reskilling

3.2.3.4 Rural economy

Member States should:

- a) Set up TVET centres in rural and remote areas to improve access for people living in these areas
- b) Encourage formal-sector enterprises and cooperatives to provide guidance, training, internships and employment opportunities for trainees at rural TVET centres
- c) Establish mobile training units and community-based training to reach people in rural and remote areas

²⁰ Such as Skills Partnership for the Global Compact on Migration and the Joint Programme on Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration in Africa (JLMP)





- d) Improve ICT infrastructure in rural areas and make it accessible and affordable for education and training purposes
- e) Improve skills for climate-resilient agriculture, ensuring food security and sustainable development in rural areas
- f) Encourage civil society, community organisations and other stakeholders to provide training and support services to people in informal and rural areas

3.3 Partnerships, knowledge and resource sharing

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

3.3.1 Linkage between the productive sector and TVET

Member States should:

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



3.3.2 Regional and international collaboration and resource pooling

Member States should:

- a) Enhance international, continental, regional and national cooperation and share information and resources in all aspects of TVET
- b) Collaborate in establishing regional centres of excellence in key sectors, where countries can pool resources to develop quality standards, curricula, training and assessment methodologies and materials and deliver state-of-the-art training
- c) Create or support networks of TVET institutions and stakeholders across countries to share best practice, curricula and resources
- d) Invest in developing a diverse pool of experts across various TVET fields
- e) Work towards the mutual recognition of TVET qualifications and skills across African countries and beyond to facilitate skilled labour mobility and enhance employability
- f) Establish or strengthen existing regional, continental and global networks²¹ and online platforms to share research, data, competency standards, TVET programmes, learning resources and success stories, and to facilitate peer learning

- g) Promote collaboration with other regions, including through South-South and triangular cooperation and hosting events that bring together stakeholders from different countries to discuss challenges, promising practices and strategies in TVET
- h) Benchmark good practices and models to promote excellence
- i) Promote exchange programmes that allow apprentices, trainees, trainers and other staff to gain experience and skills in different countries, promoting a culture of learning and cooperation

3.4 Institutional development, technology and innovation

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

3.4.1 Institutional and capacity development

Member States should take measures to:

- a) Develop and implement a comprehensive capacity-building framework, which leverages technology and innovative approaches and

²¹ An example of such networks is the UNEVOC Network for knowledge exchange.



covers policy-makers, employers' and workers' organisations, professional associations, managers, experts, teachers, trainers, master craftspersons and other TVET staff

- b)** Support and build the capacity of local institutions, enterprises and other organisations involved in planning and delivering TVET programmes, including in rural and informal economies
- c)** Enhance the capacity of SMMEs, in particular, including those in the rural and informal economy, to absorb new knowledge and skills
- d)** Train trainers in innovative, learner-centred methodologies, incorporating technology for both in-person and virtual learning, including open and distance learning
- e)** Train assessors on modern assessment and evaluation methods, including technology use
- f)** Develop the capacity of trainers and staff to implement inclusive training practices

- g)** Support initiatives to develop skills related to research methodologies and data analysis; management information systems; labour market information gathering, monitoring and evaluation; and using information for evidence-based policy- and decision-making

3.4.2 Research, innovation and entrepreneurship

Member States should:

- a)** Promote a culture of research, innovation and creativity at TVET institutions to develop and implement new ideas, nurture entrepreneurial spirit and explore ways of continuously improving systems, processes and programmes
- b)** Support partnerships with universities, development partners, TVET centres of excellence, stakeholder networks, regional authorities, research centres and think tanks to collaboratively conduct research and develop



innovative solutions for TVET challenges, including skills anticipation, delivery, assessment and certification

- c) Develop policies and legislation that guide and protect intellectual property
- d) Encourage creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship by supporting the development of TVET innovation centres and incubation hubs, and linking them to business development, financial-services providers and potential investors

3.4.3 Digital and green transformation of systems, processes and programmes

Member States should:

- a) Create an enabling environment for digital transformation by developing comprehensive digitalisation strategies to support skills and

lifelong learning systems through affordable, innovative technologies²², including digital integration into TVET programmes, and take additional measures to reduce the digital divide and gender gap

- b) Support the adoption of digital technology to automate TVET processes for skills intelligence, quality assurance, transfer of subsidies and incentives, assessment and certification, and monitoring and evaluation
- c) Develop the digital skills of teachers, trainers and staff, and provide them with the necessary tools and resources
- d) Integrate environmental sustainability into all aspects of TVET by incorporating into curricula green skills to support economies and societies, adopting eco-friendly practices in training institutions, and promoting innovation in sustainable technologies.

²² These should include technologies for digital, open and distance learning.



Chapter 4: Implementation of the Continental TVET Strategy

This chapter outlines the guiding principles for implementing the strategy, defines the roles and responsibilities of the African Union and its organs, and details the support mechanisms for implementation, as well as the monitoring and evaluation framework.

4.1 Guiding principles for implementation

The following principles will guide the implementation of the Continental TVET Strategy:

- ✓ **Country ownership and leadership.** Member States are primarily responsible for adapting and implementing this strategy's recommendations in their own contexts
- ✓ **Respect of subsidiarity:** Ensure that decision-making authority is vested in those responsible for delivering outcomes and taking action
- ✓ **Accountability:** Define precise roles and responsibilities to enhance accountability, and establish a robust feedback loop, ensuring clarity and ownership
- ✓ **Agility:** Enhancing agility through flexible structures and processes that can quickly adapt to the ever-changing landscape of the workplace is vital to efficient implementation of the strategy. This will ensure that the

strategy remains relevant and effective

- ✓ **Advocacy and support.** Providing advice and support to Member States is essential for effectively promoting and implementing this strategy

4.2 Roles and responsibilities

For the Continental TVET Strategy to be successfully implemented, the main institutions responsible for coordination and implementation should be identified, and their roles and responsibilities clarified at continental, subregional and country level. Each identified stakeholder should fulfil their respective mandates effectively. The AUC, RECs and AUDA-NEPAD will use their convening power in coordinating the implementation arrangements of the strategy, particularly as far as its continental or regional components are concerned. Member States will lead stakeholder engagement, for example with social partners, the productive sector, international multilateral bodies, bilateral partners, networks, research institutions, think tanks, non-governmental organisations, philanthropic initiatives and communities with a stake in skills development for a constantly evolving world of work.

4.2.1 African Union Commission

As the secretariat of the African Union, the AUC will have the following roles:



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

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

AUDA-NEPAD will have the following roles:

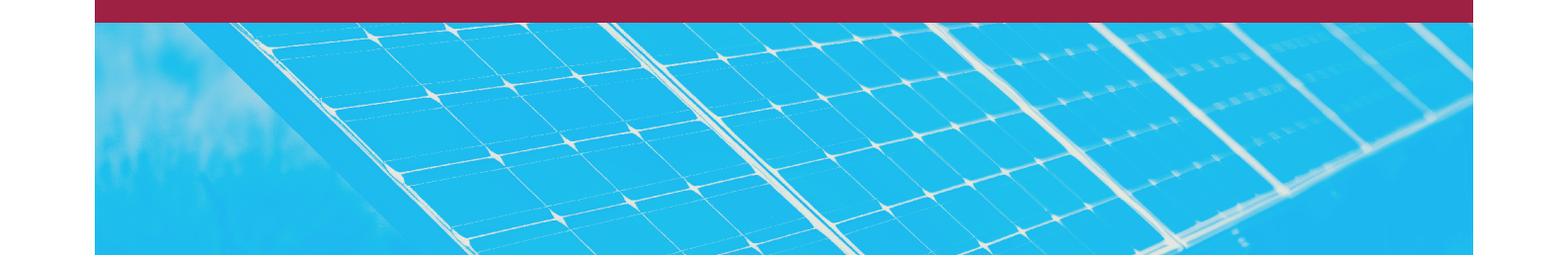
- a) Coordinating and implementing continental priority projects and pilot initiatives aligned to the Continental TVET Strategy
- b) Providing technical advisory support to African Union Member States and RECs in the implementation of the Continental TVET Strategy through the development and dissemination of implementation guidance tools
- c) Coordinating communities of practice and the TVET Cluster to facilitate collaboration, knowledge generation and exchange, and share best practice, innovative solutions and lessons learned by stakeholders involved in TVET in Africa
- d) Overseeing and tracking implementation and evaluation of the strategy

4.2.3 Regional economic communities

The RECs will have the following roles:

- a) Providing technical advisory support to Member States, enabling them to take ownership of the Continental TVET Strategy
- b) Integrating the Continental TVET Strategy objectives and principles into regional priorities and programmes
- c) Encouraging regional and inter-regional networking to share knowledge, tools and





resources for successful adoption at country level

- d) Enhancing awareness and advocacy of the TVET strategy among Member States, social partners, the productive sector, civil society organisations and other stakeholders, and facilitate its implementation
- e) Engaging the AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and other relevant stakeholders to jointly coordinate and harmonise TVET policies and programmes

4.3 Implementation support mechanisms

The successful implementation of the Continental TVET Strategy will require the following aspects.

4.3.1 Policy and technical advisory support

The implementing entities, in collaboration with, and supported by partners at their respective levels, shall:

- a) Develop and disseminate new TVET tools and methodologies to meet the needs of Member States
- b) Carry out high-quality research on skills systems and challenges and evaluate TVET initiatives taken by countries to generate knowledge on good practices and lessons learned
- c) Provide evidence-based advice on regional, national and sectoral TVET policies and programmes
- d) Facilitate and promote knowledge exchange and dissemination of good practices and lessons learned from international experiences, including through South-South and triangular cooperation, communities of practice and innovation networks
- e) Coordinate the conceptualisation/design of

flagship skills-development pilot projects and initiatives in select Member States and guide their implementation. Share experiences and lessons to potentially scale them up

4.3.2 Resource mobilisation

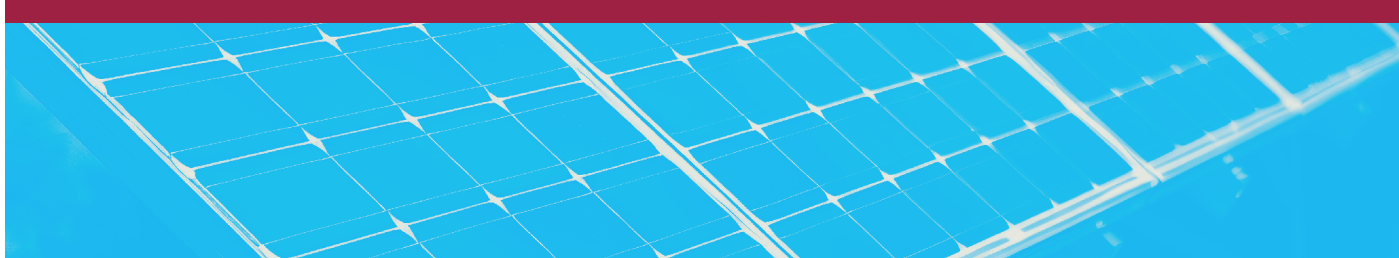
Working with partners, the implementing entities shall mobilise resources to support implementation, as well as the coordination; advisory; advocacy; and monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning functions, through:

- a) Organising funding dialogues for TVET at continental, sub-regional and national levels and strengthening partnerships with a range of donors and development partners
- b) Calling on regional and international financial institutions, multilateral development banks and sovereign donors for more significant investment in TVET systems and to support the implementation of continental, sub-regional and national policies, strategies and programmes
- c) Supporting the Member States to improve the transparency and effectiveness of their operations and diversifying their financing options for TVET

4.3.3 Communication and advocacy

To strengthen the status, attractiveness and political prominence of TVET, and ensure the integration of the Continental TVET Strategy provisions into national plans, implementing entities and their partners shall:

- a) Undertake regular large-scale communication and promotional campaigns for TVET at continental, regional and national levels
- b) Systematically document the benefits of TVET through impactful storytelling, and disseminate these benefits widely to the public at continental and regional levels,



and through other international forums and platforms

- c) Regularly hold high-level continental events focusing on TVET, such as Africa Skills Week and WorldSkills Africa, to raise its profile. Such events could be replicated at different levels
- d) Effectively engage and mobilise public and private media in the promotional campaign
- e) Advocate for increased recognition of TVET as a key enabler in achieving the continental vision of The Africa We Want at relevant forums and events
- f) Use continental and regional online platforms, such as the African Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship, to promote, disseminate and facilitate exchange of information, tools and good practice

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

4.4 Stakeholders' engagement and coordination

The implementation of the Continental TVET Strategy will be achieved through the robust and active participation, engagement and contribution of all stakeholders in the TVET and skills-development sector. These include relevant multisectoral government ministries, departments and agencies, development partners, employers' and workers' organisations, sectoral and professional bodies, the productive sector and other players.

For optimal engagement, complementarity and coherence, the coordinating and implementing entities shall promote stakeholder engagement by:

- a) Establishing and strengthening dialogue platforms, such as the TVET Cluster, while

broadening memberships for more inclusive representation. These platforms should be established at all levels of implementation and coordination

- b) Establishing and strengthening a continental network of Member States institutions with legislative mandates on TVET and skills development
- c) Jointly organising continental and regional TVET events, fostering knowledge sharing, advocacy and resource-mobilisation efforts

4.5 Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation

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

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

The implementing entities will develop an implementation action plan for the Continental TVET Strategy that articulates key milestones to aid the monitoring plan. Members states and RECs are also encouraged to develop or align implementation plans on TVET and skills development and reporting targets to feed into the Continental TVET Strategy reporting framework. RECs could play a key role in data collection and analysis and producing periodic reports to the AU.





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This Continental TVET Strategy for Africa has benefitted from an extensive review of literature and recommendations on TVET from organisations such as the African Union and its organs, the African Development Bank, the International Labour Organization, ADEA, UNESCO, the World Bank, Commonwealth of Learning, UNIDO, OECD and the European Commission. The following documents were specifically consulted.

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