



REPUBLIC OF KENYA
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY

REMARKS BY
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DURING THE VIRTUAL JOINT PROGRAMME
ON BOOSTING DECENT JOBS AND ENHANCING SKILLS
FOR YOUTH IN AFRICA'S DIGITAL ECONOMY.

THURSDAY 22ND OCTOBER 2020

Representatives from the ILO/ITU/AU

Ministers from Participating Countries,

International Donors,

Local Donors,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf on my Country, My Cabinet Colleague CS Joe Mucheru and on my own behalf, let me register my gratitude for according Kenya an opportunity to participate in this roundtable **ILO/ITU/AU Joint Programme on Boosting Decent Jobs and Enhancing Skills for Youth in Africa's Digital Economy.**

Kenya wishes to assure the Global fraternity that it remains committed to the joint initiative in promoting job creation and entrepreneurship opportunities in the digital economy for our youths.

The digital economy has become an important topic to the global economy since rapidly growing digital technologies have transformed our economies and our daily social activities in an unprecedented pace and dimensions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Kenya has embarked on a digital transformation journey to ensure that we maximize on the opportunities for advancing sustainable economic development.

The digital economy is rapidly transforming the employment landscape across industries including financial services, health, entertainment, transportation and of course, information and communication sector itself.

A growing number of public and private sector decision makers across the world are seeking to foster the building blocks of the digital economy; this includes increasing the number of young women and men who possess digital skills.

Kenya boasts notable achievements and success stories in the promotion and growth of the digital economy. One such example is the Ajira Digital Program a Government Initiative, spearheaded by the Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs that seeks to promote Kenya as a choice labour destination for multinational companies as well as local and public sector players. The program provides support and interventions around:

- Supply of digital work both local and international;
- Access to training and mentorship;
- Access to infrastructure – devices and internet; and
- Awareness and change of mind-sets to embrace the future of work amongst the youth and their influencers (guardians and educational institutions).

In addition, through a One-Government approach, My Ministry has developed an interactive web-based Labour Market Information System (LMIS) popularly known as the Kenya Labour Market Information System (KLMIS) a one-stop shop for all labour market information in Kenya.

This system is designed to provide timely, accurate, and reliable and up-to date labour market information. It gives useful information to the youth such as occupations and skills in high demand; the future skills requirements in various sectors and pathways for career progression, which all contribute, to enhancing their employability. This intervention is supported through periodic Job Opportunity Analysis (JOA) and development of Job Opportunity Indices (JOI).

While this system is transforming lives, **My Ministry has been engaging partners to upgrade it to the next level so that as many youths as possible benefit in its usage. We are now planning aggressive dissemination to market it through face-to-face interaction at Employment centres and Ajira Youth Empowerment centres; use of ICT-based platforms and social media promotions; below the line campaigns – radio, TV and external branding (leaflets); job fairs, among others.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a country, we also intend to reach out to youth through our Public employment services programmes such as

1. Job placement

Job Placement is the matching of youth looking for work with available job openings. This activity is the core and primary function of the National Employment Authority. Our focus is to make this function electronic

2. Career guidance and Counselling

Career guidance and counselling encompass structured advice provided over a period for employment and career purposes. This service is currently being provided face-to face at our employment centres.

My Ministry would be interested to collaborate with donors to support in building capacity to offer the services online .These services include development of career information, online self-assessment tools, and training on online counselling interviews.

3. Boosting Internship Programmes in Kenya

Provision of internship opportunities to young graduates from Kenya's tertiary institutions is one of the core mandates of my ministry. The success of the internship programme will boost youth employment.

My Ministry is implementing this programme through the National Employment Authority and would need collaboration with donors in provision of ICT infrastructure and capacity building of staff.

My ministry also intend to undertake other Job rich programmes geared toward provision of Labour market information especially to the youth including

1. Tracer studies

ILO recommends early intervention as a means to avoid long-term unemployment among youth and the problems associated with it since as the unemployment spell increases, the young individual loses contact with the labour market, working habits weaken, skills deteriorate and job search intensity decreases. The longer the unemployment spell, the more intensive and costly intervention became to help the young jobseekers re-enter the labour market.

In view of this, My Ministry is interested to collaborate with stakeholders in undertaking tracer studies regularly so that there is information on the period it takes graduants from various programmes and levels of training before they are able to join the labour market. This will facilitate designing of appropriate retraining programmes.

2. Short term Training

Short term training programmes targeting the young people is a good way of retooling/skilling the youth to prepare them join the labour market. This should target youth with low qualifications, who have spent some time out of work or who lack work experience. This training should focus on work experience and the transition to work; address multiple labour market barriers and target self-employment. The focus now should be on the skills needed to benefit from the digital era.

My Ministry under the National industrial Authority has the capacity to offer these training and is already doing a lot of industrial training.

3. Non-refundable grants to trainees

If training on self-employment is to have any meaningful impact it must include advice on viable business ventures but most importantly, it should include a component of non-refundable grants. Evidence suggest that since most youth start up do not receive assistance, they are disadvantaged and hence report high market failures.

While our Country has a number of funds to support youth who seek to go into business, this need to be done differently so that youth start up survive beyond two years and hence create more jobs.

Kenya Looks forward to favourable support from our partners in implementing our youth friendly programmes

Thank You and God bless you all