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on the Analytical Work
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Thematic synthesis report on sub-theme 2

**Skills Development and the World of Work:
Challenges for Education and Training**

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Working Document

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Thematic report theme 2

The employment of youth and the world of work: Which skills need to be developed?

1.1 Preamble: the economic and social realities of and the challenges to be met on the African continent

1. To approach the theme of the employment of youth and the world of work from the angle of skills development means first of all understanding a certain number of realities and challenges which make up the economic, social and education scene on the African continent.

2. Giving qualifications to young Africans in 2008 relies on making sure that these relate to the reality of employment and the world of work in the various countries (2.1.07; 2.1.15), as well as making sure that such qualifications become factors which will add dynamism to the economy of that particular country and will facilitate the access of these young people to employment, enabling them to pass from a subsistence economy to one of growth and development.

The socio-economic realities

3. There is a tendency to define the development of skills according to a specific economy and a formal labour market, when all the statistics show that informal employment and activities are increasing in number throughout the African continent: they constitute, according to the country, between 95% (in Benin) and 31% (in South Africa) of the labour market, contributing to the national riches of the country at a rate higher, on average, than 50% of the GDP. Today, it is necessary to consider the development of skills in relation to the economic challenges of the continent, and as a privileged means of giving youth a chance to participate actively in the improvement of the African economy and thereby increasing its dynamism.

The reality concerning education

4. Although the MDG have as one of their objectives for the year 2015 a 100% achievement rate for the completion of a primary education cycle, the present rate is, on average, only 65% throughout the entire African continent. Thus, as from the end of primary, 35% of the children in one age group remain outside the education system. At the same time, only 50% of them start the first cycle of secondary education, and, in eleven countries, this percentage is below 30%. To talk about skills development is thus to take into account the situation with regard to the exclusion, outside of the formal vocational education and training system, of numerous young people of school age, and to design mechanisms for alternative education and training that will give these young people the basic knowledge as well as the know-how and the necessary abilities for their effective and qualified entrance into the labour market.

The reality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

5. In most African countries and particularly in the sub-Saharan countries, TVET only plays a minor role in providing suitable qualifications and enabling the subsequent insertion of the individual into the labour market. This type of education and vocational training, which was inherited from the colonial period and integrated into the educational system, was supposed to provide young people with the theoretical and practical knowledge required to give them access to the modern economy, but the establishments concerned have never received sufficient educational or technical means to enable the adaptation of young people to the continuously evolving needs of such an economy. Thus, TVET has always been always marginal, especially as most of the employment in the formal sector that it was aiming at has continuously diminished over the last two decades in all the countries of the continent, due to the effects on the economy of structural adjustment policies. This does not mean that the importance of vocational education and training in the formal sector should be underestimated (numerous studies have already been carried out on this subject), but rather to emphasize the challenges of vocational education and training which have not been taken up with regard to a large number of young people working in the informal sector of the economy.

6. Today, TVET only trains, on average, between 1 - 5% of young people in search of employment, with the exception of a few countries where up to a third of young people are enrolled in these subjects at secondary level. Most of these subjects are, in fact, carried out by already existent means of informal training, such as on-site training and traditional apprenticeship, particularly in the countries of West Africa. This means that particular attention should be paid to the reforms presently being undertaken with regard to these informal mechanisms and the desire of a certain number of countries to integrate them into the global education and training system. But the restructuring of the modes of traditional professionalization, which generally needs to receive support in the form of a educational and technical partnership with centres of formal training, can only be successful if, at the same time, the countries concerned reconstruct and implement a vocational and technical education mechanism which will help them to invest in the strategic qualifications and professions in this field that lead to growth and development.

7. The understanding of the realities of the situation means that, if the African ministries of education are to obtain a certain level of education for all youth, the equivalent of 9 years of education, this cannot be carried out exclusively through the general education system. The diversity of individual situations has to be taken into account and, consequently, recognition must be given in the various countries to the experiments being undertaken, or the mechanisms being used to respond to the rights of all young people to access the best possible level both of education and of qualifications.

1.2 Introduction

8. This report gives an account of the studies undertaken with a view to the preparation of the Biennale. It analyzes the dynamics of the transformations taking place on the African continent with regard to young people's qualifications and their entry into the labour market. The analysis of good practice in certain African countries has also been taken as a basis for this report (Uganda, Congo Brazzaville, Ghana, Senegal, Namibia, Botswana, Benin, Mali, Ethiopia, South Africa, Morocco, Angola, Cameroon, Sierra Leone...), and the manner in which they have established paths towards training and professional insertion, particularly with regard to those young people who were excluded from the education system, to allow them to acquire the basic knowledge and

skills to which they have a right. It also takes into account the observation of the innovative experiences and mechanisms of certain European countries (Holland, Norway, France...), as well as the transversal analyses carried out by international organizations and certain bilateral, technical and financial partners, in order to better understand the specificity and the diversity of African situations in the field of skills development and youth employment. Some of these analyses are the result of field surveys undertaken in various countries with the intent of getting to know the concrete difficulties that young Africans are now faced with, either when looking for activities to be undertaken, or for employment.

A targeted reading of the challenges to be met and overcome with regard to insertion into the labour market

9. The documentation requested and prepared for the Biennale gives an account of the main challenges to be met by the African continent if its youth is to have a positive outlook with regard to qualifications and to work, which it often lacks. It also indicates strategic and operational ways of thinking about and tackling the problems involved in the various African countries. This report does not propose a synthesis of everything that has been noted, analyzed and implemented. It targets the challenges which appear to be essential with regard to African realities, and the measures and mechanisms to be implemented by the political, economic and social policy-makers in order to ensure a concrete and accessible future for all youth on the continent. It is structured according to a certain number of transversal themes which give support to the mechanisms and the means implemented by the countries in order to ensure, in an adequate manner, the development of skills that young people need, so that they have the greatest possible chance of finding employment on the labour market.

The development of skills; an absolute necessity for post-primary education

10. The concept of post-primary education or training covers the various forms of cognitive and practical learning which a pupil might need from the end of basic education up to entry into higher education. The present study essentially concerns vocational education and training of the formal, non-formal or informal type, which is actually being implemented in various African countries. But it is not intended that these paths be simply identified and explained. It questions the types and modes of professionalization to be implemented, as much for those who are not enrolled as for those who are undertaking general and technical studies, in order to facilitate their access to the labour market. It questions more generally which reforms should be carried out in general secondary and in technical and vocational education, as well as in higher education, in order to enable young people to acquire the social and professional skills which will take them into work now and which will bring about the socio-economic development of the future.

1.3 A data base: the implementation of the necessary diversity of the paths and mechanisms leading to the development of skills

11. The various country enquiries and field surveys show that there are many paths towards, as well as mechanisms by which, throughout the African continent, post-primary vocational education and training can be undertaken. These paths and mechanisms try to respond to the specific needs of those who have been excluded at a very young age from both the systems and mechanisms of education and training as well as from the possibility of meeting the requirements of economic sectors or vocational organizations to have a better qualified work force. They are implemented, in

their diversity, in numerous countries and include a whole array of ways and means which will lead young people towards a minimum level of professional qualifications.

The increase in alternative functional literacy paths, of pre-professionalization, and of restructured apprenticeship

12. It is remarkable to note the convergence that exists between various countries on the necessity to place at the heart of educational and training policies to be implemented young people who have left the education system too early and who, because of this, have not been able to acquire the basic knowledge and skills which could lead them in a positive manner towards a qualified entry into an activity or a job. There are two main manners of intervention: the first is related to functional literacy and the placing of someone in a professional situation, and aims at motivating a group of people of few means to acquire a minimum of theoretical and practical knowledge before their insertion into the labour market; the second aims at restructuring the paths leading to traditional apprenticeship, in order to allow the young apprentices to get to the level required by the evolution of their future trade whilst acquiring an accepted and certified qualification.

13. Mali like Morocco has set up, within the framework of the general management of non-formal education, alternative mechanisms for literacy and professionalization for those young people who have been excluded from basic education. In Mali, these mechanisms have become institutionalized in the form of centres of education for development or CED (2.1.18). These centres, which are for young people from the age of 9 to 15, have courses lasting four years for the acquisition of basic knowledge and two years whereby the young people are put into a professional situation. The evaluations recently undertaken call for a reinforcement of the efficiency and effectiveness of these centres by shortening and bringing about a better integration of the two learning phases. Morocco, on its part, has set up, in partnership with the professional world, a functional education and training path for the out-of-school 12 to 15 year-olds, so that they can gain minimum basic skills which will help them to become effectively inserted into the labour market. Also available for the same population is a programme of reinsertion of the young which allows them to meet up and join the formal mechanisms of TVET (2.1.07). The artisans federations of Benin and Mali, just like those of Senegal, have, on their part, initiated training workshops, which link functional literacy and pre-professionalization (2.1.21) for those out-of-school youth who are not yet old enough to work.

14. Most of the countries in West Africa are presently investing a great deal in the restructuring of traditional apprenticeship which leads to the training, in most of the countries of the region, of the great majority of young people who enter into the labour market (2.1.21). Thus the car-repair sector in Senegal trains about 300,000 apprentices whilst the TVET system hardly teaches more than 20,000 pupils. This reformulation of apprenticeship, which has been carried out within the framework of a partnership between the public powers and the professional organizations, particularly in Benin, Togo, Mali and Senegal, has a triple effect.

15. First of all, it enables young apprentices to gain both theoretical as well as practical knowledge and to acquire at the end of the apprenticeship an acknowledged level of qualification, which is, in most cases, certified, and thus to be better prepared to keep up with the evolution in technologies and trades.

16. It also gives the professionals who have accepted to be masters of apprenticeship the opportunity of improving their own levels of skills and thus to improve upon the quality of their own production and services.

17. It thus constitutes for the countries by which it has been implemented the possibility of integrating all the providers of public and private formal, non-formal and informal training into an integrated system of professionalization which relies on the strength of tradition, whilst making sure that it evolves according to the standards of quality and the technological evolutions of a market that has become increasingly global.

The evolution of the TVET mechanisms towards forms of professionalization adapted to every kind of economic and social area

18. Although some countries have made heavy investments in the integration of the paths towards non-formal or informal vocational training within the global system of education and training, other countries have initiated important reforms of TVET which are likely to better respond to economic and social demand, whilst developing new forms of public/private partnerships.

19. Namibia is thus undertaking a double reform movement (2.5.06). It has, on the one hand, greatly changed the pre-requirements for access to TVET by opening up the path towards training to a public which up to then was left out of the procedure due to a highly academic form of selection. On the other hand, it has abandoned the idea of giving all apprentices the same type of general knowledge and has adapted the apprenticeships of these learners to the skills required according to the socio-economic context of both the companies and of the local labour market.

20. Uganda has, similarly, initiated a reform which relies on the redefinition of the public/private partnership so that it can both better respond to the demand for certain skills required for economic development, particularly in rural areas, and improve people's appreciation of TVET, which, up to then, largely underrated it and which did little to enhance the status of the individual (2.1.01).

21. Ethiopia has initiated a large-scale reform. Its aim is to fundamentally change the paradigm of TVET, by having it structured according to supply rather than demand, and by opening up access to training to a public which is usually left aside (youth and adults who have failed at school; of a low level of training, or who are illiterate; the entrepreneurs and workers of both the formal and informal economy who need to raise their level of skills and to obtain recognized qualifications...), and by encouraging the various establishments to develop training contents adapted to the needs of their public, which also includes those involved in the informal economy (2.1.07).

The beginning of the evolution of general and technical education towards a professionalization adapted to the local environment

22. The premature departure of young people from the first cycle of secondary education without having received any preparation has led the Senegalese authorities to implement measures and means of professionalization to remedy such a situation. One of the first actions undertaken by the ministry of education has been to introduce into the colleges, and into the *daaras*, lessons on entrepreneurship, which allow pupils to acquire a trade linked to the needs of the local economy, whilst continuing to take general studies. The results are positive to the extent that the pupils who have thus been trained have either succeeded in becoming inserted into the labour market or have been motivated to continue their studies, having acquired, whilst following this particular path, a vocational diploma (2.3.11). A second step that has been taken is the TVET ministry's action that has enabled a technical high school to open a qualifying stream for out-of-school youth and to train them, together with the help of territorial actors, in the needs of the local market (2.3.10). Kenya, like Ghana, is extremely conscious of the importance of giving traditional apprentices a training in

management so that they can better insert themselves into the local environment, whether it be urban or rural (2.1.16). South Africa is developing, on its part, “learnerships” or sandwich courses, which prepare certain young people to work in local communities (2.1.16).

A great need for investment to be made in a TVET which is adapted to rural areas

23. Various countries understand the necessity to increase and to better complete the vocational training of youth in rural areas (2.3.03 , 2.3.09, 2.2.01). The example given by the Congo, which has created a stream of vocational training in food preservation and transformation (2.2.02), shows the effectiveness of a professionalization which is targeted particularly at the improvement of agricultural production and, more precisely, at the key trades of this sector. The Songhai centres in Benin are very active in the rural areas and prepare the pupils in their care to develop agricultural productions which are profitable, whilst giving them the financial means to create, whenever necessary, their own activity (2.5.11). The very positive effects of the “Family Rural School”, implemented in Cameroon by an NGO – the European Institute of Co-operation and Development (IECD), show the fruitfulness of an intervention which helps the young to become qualified in the trades of fishing, agriculture and breeding. Since most countries need to take up the challenge to ensure the security of their food and have the possibility of developing an agro-industry which is a potential source of exportation, it becomes urgent to think about giving priority to rural areas in matters of professionalization.

24. In a global fashion, the various countries have evolved from a separate and non-coordinated vision of the situation towards an integrated or inclusive vision of the development of knowledge and skills. There is little doubt that the development of post-primary vocational education and training mechanisms calls for the recognition at one and the same time of both the diversity and the integration of such mechanisms and paths into a global system of the development of skills. Such a system should extend well beyond the present boundaries of TVET and should take into account the whole vista of economic and social needs, including those of the urban and rural informal sector (2.1.15 et 2.1.7).

1.4 A shared understanding: the necessity of a more coherent approach, with a greater level of partnership with the administration

25. The administration determines the type of relationship that the authorities in power establish between the content of the policies that they desire to promote and the rules, structures and processes needed in order to implement these policies. In the case of TVET, this administration is determined by the fact that the development of skills calls on a large number of public and private actors who intervene both in training and in professional insertion. A holistic approach is thus needed which takes into account the plurality of the actors (the various ministries concerned, but also the local communities, the social partners, the providers of private, lay or religious services, non-governmental organizations...), and the plurality of the modes of training: formal, non-formal or informal. The analysis of the various contexts and situations described in the work undertaken for the Biennale provide material for a better understanding of the problem.

Introducing a greater level of coordination and more decentralized decision making into the responsibilities of the work of public authorities

26. The modalities and structures of the implementation of TVET, and more extensively of the development of skills, are very varied in Africa just as in other continents. The variety of

mechanisms implemented have already been described. In addition to this diversity, there is a fragmentation of the responsibilities of the various ministries (in certain countries more than ten ministries have responsibilities within this sphere of activity), without there being any coordinated or coherent vision of the whole matter. It is obvious therefore that only an integrated and coherent approach will enable the diversity of post-primary vocational education and training to become imbued with a positive and synergetic dynamism.

27. The African countries respond in various way to the problem of its administration.

28. Uganda has tried to reinforce the efficiency and effectiveness of TVET and has redefined, with this in mind, the role and the missions of the Ministry of Education and Sports. The government has thus attached to this ministry all those departments which are involved in technical and vocational education and training. The new administration thus created is called “Companies, Technical and Vocational Education and Training”. It emphasizes the diversity of the providers of training, the role played by the private structures, and the role played by the public authorities in facilitating the work carried out by both the public and private sectors. At the same time, in order to overcome the fragmentation of responsibilities, the minister decided that a system of trade references and training modules should be designed so that they could be included in the national system of Ugandan qualifications (2.1.01).

29. Bringing coherence to the administration does not mean centralization. Thus, the creation of a coherent national framework of qualifications goes together, in various countries, with the decentralization of vocational education and training responsibilities as well as with the adaptation, at a local level, of the training curricula. This was the case in Uganda where the regional governments have become competent in the area of skills development (2.1.01). This was also the case in Mali and Benin, where the development of professionalization mechanisms for young people, particularly those in difficulty, or for out-of-school youth, has been handed over to regional and local communities (2.1.07). Namibia also constitutes an example of decentralization and of localization of the design, the provision and the evaluation of the training curricula. It must be noted that the transfer of the latter to the territorial level, in order to be totally effective, requires a reinforcement of the institutional and human capacities of those in charge locally, and the implementation of a system of quality monitoring (2.5.06).

30. The decentralization of the responsibilities of the actors in the domain of TVET has, as a consequence, the design and implementation of a supply of training which is more in line with both local development and professional insertion. Thus the Congo has completed, by means of a project for the reinsertion of youth through community apprenticeship, or the RAC project (2.1.09), sandwich courses centred on the acquisition of skills that lend dynamism to the local economic context. Benin also, by launching trade centres (2.1.07), and Mali, by means of the generalization of Education for Development Centres, or CED (2.1.18), leans on the support of local or regional communities to respond to the needs of the local labour market and thus helps to insert youth more effectively into existing jobs, or to create them.

Towards a new interface between the public and private supply of training

31. The holistic approach to the realities of TVET, as well as the establishment of a certain coherence, and the decentralization of strategic and operational policies of skills development, reinforces the public/private partnership in the field of vocational education and training.

32. There has been an increase in the number of actors involved as much in the domain of skills development as in the insertion into the labour market. Thus the professionalization of high schools, colleges, and *daaras* in Senegal (2.3.10, 2.3.11) has brought about working partnerships between the academic officers of these establishments, the local authorities, professional organizations of artisans, and chambers of commerce and trade. In the same way, the setting up of locations for vocational education and training in the rural areas has brought about greater cooperation between the local authorities, the administrative authorities representing the ministries concerned, and the NGOs. This increase in the number of actors, which also exists within the framework of the reinforcement of the autonomy of the establishments in Ethiopia (2.1.07), as well as in the setting up of sectoral centres in Tunisia (2.2.05), requires that quality criteria be established, taking into account the capacity of these actors to align the request for training and insertion with the effective economic and social demand. For this, Botswana has established a national vocational education and training authority (the Botswana Training Authority or BOTA), which is responsible for the accreditation, the registration and the piloting of public and private training and which checks the conformity of their provision to the standards of quality defined in the national plan (2.5.10).

33. The analysis of the situation of the various countries shows the development of the private supply of training as an interface to the public supply. The development of such a supply has various advantages: it has a tendency to lighten the State's responsibility in the way of costs; it also enables the mobilization of a technical expertise which is close to the realities of the area and to ensure particularly that the training implementation is in conformity with the needs required by the labour market in the form of skills (2.2.06). The analysis undertaken shows, furthermore, that the interface between the private and public training supply only functions correctly within the framework of the strategic orientations and standards of quality defined in the national plan and when implemented in a cooperative manner by each party (2.1.21).

34. The public/private partnerships are particularly implemented within the framework of those mechanisms of professionalization which use apprenticeship and sandwich courses (2.1.07). Such mechanisms, developed mainly in West Africa, often train both teachers/trainers and the professionals that are involved in the training of young learners. Few countries have, unfortunately, implemented the continuing education of the personnel involved in the training of youth. But the various public and private mechanisms cannot be managed in an effective manner and lead to successful professionalization when there is no significant reinforcement of the skills of those who are there to implement such mechanisms (2.1.07).

Towards a partnership in the piloting of post-primary vocational education mechanisms

35. All the studies show an increase in partnership in the piloting of the new post-primary vocational education mechanisms between public authorities and private actors, as well as between public authorities and social partners. This new form of piloting has various beneficial effects.

36. It enables the analysis of the supply of qualifications which are the most appropriate for the needs of both the local communities and professional branches (Tunisia, South Africa, Senegal ... 2.1.07), and thus to set up the supply of training in skills on the basis of a system of trade references, integrating the latest professional and technological evolutions.

37. It emphasizes the privileged role of the relationship between public authorities and social partners and, more profoundly, the importance of social dialogue. Such a relationship and dialogue enable numerous countries either to define together strategic plans for the development of skills

(South Africa 2.1.07), or to pilot, finance and manage together actions to be taken with regard to vocational education of the post-primary type (West Africa, North Africa, 2.2.05), or to co-manage, through national committees of vocational education (2.3.16), training and qualification mechanisms (West Africa).

38. Finally, it demonstrates the effectiveness of the dynamics involved in the partnerships which have been implemented in the various countries. As a result, the public authorities have moved from the exclusive role of piloting the TVET system to a role of regulating and reinforcing the skills of the partners so that they can play a more effective role at the various levels of their involvement. Thus, the Ministry of Education and Sports in Uganda has reoriented its daily management responsibilities towards a role of strategic management, implying the definition of policy orientations, the development of performance indicators, the finalization of processes of regulation, follow-up and evaluation, and the passage from direct institutional management towards a support role aimed at maximum results in terms of efficiency and effectiveness (2.1.01).

39. The changes being carried out both in the domain of the administration of TVET and in the role of the public authorities towards new responsibilities, which are, at one and the same time, more strategic and taken up more in partnership with others, suggest that the setting up of post-primary vocational education mechanisms will become better integrated into the economic and social realities and will lead to greater co-management by all the actors involved. It can be taken for granted that such mechanisms will considerably increase both the sustainability of their action and the relevance of their results.

1.5 A future obligation: a new sharing out of responsibilities and modes of financial intervention

40. The analysis of budgetary grants shows that the public resources given over to the professionalization of youth go almost exclusively to the TVET system, which trains, however, only a minority of young people entering into the labour market. Out-of-school youth essentially acquire their skills within the framework of the informal sector (on-the-spot training and within the framework of traditional apprenticeship), outside of all state aid. The various analyses undertaken on the modes and mechanisms of financing bring to light a certain number of elements and call for quite a fundamental revision of actual practices in the allocation of resources.

41. It appears that a very small part of public expenditure is given over TVET within the framework of the public expenditure allocated to the education and training system. This portion represents less than 5% of the National Education budget in Senegal and hardly goes over 5% of public education expenditure in Togo. The situation is almost identical in all countries in West Africa (2.2.04). The problem concerning the financing of TVET is even more limited in rural areas, which lack the establishments and places where youth can be trained in relationship to the needs of the local economy and the labour market (2.2.01). The TVET situation is not, however, identical throughout the continent. Although the portion of the numbers in technical and vocational education and training does not go beyond 2% in countries such as Kenya, Senegal, Ghana, Zambia, Namibia or Guinea, it attains more than 30% in three countries: Egypt, Rwanda and Cameroon (Dakar+7). The coverage and the financing of this form of teaching depend on the priority that the country has given to this sub-sector, which lies within secondary education.

42. In fact, most of the costs of professionalization of youth going into the labour market are shared out between the family and the artisans or the micro-entrepreneurs who employ them and train

them, either within the framework of traditional apprenticeship, or by means of on-the-spot training. Thus in Ethiopia nearly all the workers from the informal sector, which represents 90% of the jobs in the country, have been trained without any help from the TVET budget (2.1.07). The situation is identical in numerous countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

43. The restructuring of the traditional apprenticeship mechanisms and their transformation into qualifying and certifying mechanisms in West Africa (2.2.05), but also the measures undertaken towards the development of strategic skills in South Africa (2.1 07) are financed by the Vocational Education and Training Fund, the resources of which come essentially from a tax on vocational education and training. This tax, paid by companies in the formal economy, is collected by the public treasury then sent back in the form of a budgetary grant to the Fund which then distributes it to support initial and continuous vocational education and training. Such Funds have played and still play an important role in the implementation of alternative post-primary vocational education and training mechanisms to those of TVET. Managed within the framework of a tripartite partnership between the State, the employers and the unions, and often completed by complementary financing by donors, they enable a system of private/public co-financing, the interest of which is obvious.

44. The tendency to integrate the various alternative mechanisms of professionalization into a global system of vocational education and training exists in most countries without appropriate budgetary grants being made (2.2.05). The taking into account of the necessary diversity of the paths taken towards the development of skills raises the question of the reorientation of public funds towards the most marginalized and calls for the implementation of means and models of co-financing which for the moment are only at their initial stages.

45. Budgetary means being limited in all of these countries, it is important to analyze the unitary costs of the various existing mechanisms and to orient the investments towards the mechanisms which are financially sustainable and effective in terms of professional insertion and economic development (2.3.10. et 2.1.21).

46. The development of post-primary vocational education mechanisms should help the maximum number of young people to acquire the skills required for their entry into employment just as it must contribute to the dynamics of an economy which needs to greatly improve the quality of its productions and services as well as the level of its revenues. But such a development can only be ensured on condition that it calls upon the means and instruments of financing which can ensure both effectiveness and sustainability. It is urgent that all the partners involved, public and private, work on the finalization of the modalities and mechanisms of financing which are adapted to the stakes that the training and the qualification of the entire population of youth represent.

1.6 A challenge to be faced: equitable access of all to training and professional insertion

47. The analysis of the situation of the development of skills in African countries brings to light the various forms of inequality of access to vocational education which particularly affects youth with the least education, particularly in rural areas and, within these categories of youth, young girls and young women as well youth scarred as a result of war.

To improve the access to post-primary vocational education of youth suffering from education difficulties, particularly in rural areas

48. Post-primary vocational education and training must respond to those pupils' needs for skills who have not completed the Education for All cycle, or who drop out of the first cycle of secondary education without having had the least preparation for professional life. It is not possible to leave out-of-school youth to itself or to let young people live in the road just as it is impossible to ignore numerous young people who drop out at some particular point of general education. The demand for equity vis-à-vis these persons underlines the necessity to set up, as in Morocco and in Mali (2.1.07 et 2.1.18), functional literacy for those who have been excluded, which, at one and the same time, is linked both to mechanisms for professionalization and to the prospect of a qualified entry into the labour market. The demand for equity also indicates the importance of alternative paths that constitute, in West Africa, and particularly in Benin, Togo, Mali and Senegal, the evolutions taking place in traditional apprenticeship towards an apprenticeship which is dual or alternate (2.1.21). The setting up, in Uganda, of polyvalent training centres at the level of the communes also facilitates reaching out to people near where they live and to developing modular training adapted to their needs for professionalization.

49. The inequality of access to school for all and because of this to vocational education is still more frequent in rural areas. The situation in Ethiopia is, in this respect, an emblem of the gap which can exist between urban and rural education. Thus in the years 2004/2005, the gross rate of education for Addis Ababa was 125% when it was 75 to 80% for the regions of Amhara and Dirdawa and only 15 to 17% for the regions of Afar and of Somalia (2.1.07). This situation can be explained particularly because of the distances that the children have to cover to go to school and by the seasonal mobilization of these children for work in the fields. It is also due to the provision of fewer educational establishments in rural areas than in most of the countries of the continent. Faced with such realities, some countries have decided to invest in the creation of the Family Rural School (the case of Cameroon), or to set up family and rural houses (as in Morocco), so that inequalities are reduced between urban and rural attendance (2.1.07), and to provide, at the same time, young people thus educated with a minimum of professional skills. The creation of trade centres as near as possible to territorial communities in Mali (2.1.07), as well as the transformation of de-concentrated public establishments in Senegal and in the Congo into places of professional insertion into the local economy and into the agro-alimentary stream (2.1.09, 2.2.02, 2.3.10 and 2.3.11) responds to this same need to take into account the educational and professionalization needs of the rural areas which are often left aside.

Fighting against gender inequalities in the access to vocational education and to employment

50. The objective of gender parity, as much in terms of admission as of completion of education, has not been attained by various countries. Thus, out of 41 countries for which data is available, there are, on average, only 92 girls out of 100 at school entrance, and 88 girls out of a hundred in the last year of their education (Dakar +7). These gender inequalities become more and more obvious as education advances and are particularly present at the level of TVET.

51. The analysis of the situation in Ghana (2.3.08) brings to light a certain number of socio-economic and socio-cultural factors which explain, in part, the existing discrimination. Thus the teachers have a tendency to listen more to the boys, to spend more time with them and to enhance their school results. The girls are furthermore disadvantaged by early marriages and maternities, which has led some countries, such as Zimbabwe, South Africa, or Botswana to adopt legislation allowing young mothers to take up their training courses after the interruption (2.2.14). Jamaica has introduced into certain training mechanisms, modules to avoid early pregnancies and to lessen the aftermath of maternity for young adolescents. The young girls and the women are also submitted to

the double obligation of training and the carrying out of domestic work. The following has been expressed in a transversal study relating to the gender disparity on the labour market in Africa (2.3.14), “young girls have double the amount of work in class and at home, and because of the feeble quality of primary education in sub-Saharan Africa, they willingly accept domestic work and marriage rather than look for, outside of housework and the agricultural sector, work of a better quality.” Girls, in fact, have reduced mobility, particularly in the countries where there is a high level practice of the Muslim faith. Those who emigrate have a tendency to live from prostitution, which calls for the absolute necessity to implement locally, to counter-balance this, the appropriate means of training which will allow them to accede to employment and activities enabling them to earn their living in a decent manner (2.3.14). The opposite of such a situation is to be seen in men’s mobility, whereby they look for work with a good income outside of their family or even outside of their own country.

52. The improvement of the access of girls to post-primary vocational education has to be provided by publicity (at school, on the radio, or on television), showing them how they can become trained to work in certain trades or in certain jobs. It must also be done, as in Senegal and in Cameroon, by actions undertaken which are aimed at technical training and the professionalization of women, particularly in rural areas (2.1.07), and/or as in the Congo, by the decision to train girls and boys equally in trades linked to local development (2.1.09). This improvement requires, in a more global manner, a policy decision which includes equity in terms of gender in the educational and training mechanisms and recognizes furthermore the value of the alternative mechanisms of professionalization in which many young girls and young women have been trained.

Taking into account the specific needs of youth in a post-conflict situation

53. There is no doubt that war in numerous countries has provoked specific traumatism in young people who, after dropping out early from school, were submitted to the life of a soldier and who sometimes remain psychologically and corporally scarred. Many of these young people have difficulty in becoming socially and professionally re-inserted, and need, for reasons relating to equity, but also to social peace, appropriate measures to be applied which give them a real chance of access to training and employment. Angola has, in this respect, developed appropriate means of training and insertion for the ex-combatant youth and more particularly for those who have been handicapped as a result of the conflict (2.1.07). The Congo has reacted to urban insecurity resulting from the war by setting up, in Brazzaville, a vocational education mechanism of the alternative type enabling youth who have become alienated from society to learn a trade or an activity which generates income (2.1.09). Sierra Leone has, on its part, after ten years of war, established a national council for technical and vocational education and training (NCTVA), and has developed a vocational education and training strategy as well as relative actions in order to insert the ex-soldiers into the labour market. Such examples are far from being exhaustive, but show the need to take into account - in the existing or in to those to be implemented post-primary mechanisms - the particular situation of those youths who are situated in zones of latent insecurity or who have been severely affected by recent conflicts.

53. The analysis of the access of youth to diverse mechanisms of professionalization indicates that the situation regarding the inequality of access to training and to successful professional insertion into the labour market requires the setting up of post-primary mechanisms of acquisition and the development of skills that are appropriate to the various populations that have been identified. These mechanisms could particularly take the form of multi-dimensional programmes combining, such as those set up in Sierra Leone and in Uganda, basic education, vocational education, the acquisition of social skills, and a psychosocial accompaniment. There is no unique

response to discriminations due to exclusion from education, or to the gender factor and post-conflict situations. Only the diversity of means and measures can respond to the demand for equity, which appears to be shared by all.

1.7 Training in entrepreneurship

54. Most young people who drop out of the education system can neither find employment in the formal sector nor create their own activity in the informal sector. Traditional general training is furthermore incapable of giving young people the knowledge and skills that they need to increase their chances of gaining access to a decent standard of living. As a result, in numerous countries, strategies are being developed to introduce entrepreneurship into education and training.

56. The increase of the informal economy in nearly all the countries means that training to be self-employed and, more extensively, to gain the desire to undertake has become an integral part of the basic skills that young people acquire in the various post-primary training mechanisms.

57. Education and training to gain the desire to undertake have a double dimension. On the one hand, they give young people the capacity to develop personal skills which help them to identify work opportunities and to transform them into the creation of activities. On the other hand, they give these young people the technical and managerial knowledge and skills that they need to succeed in creating their business or in becoming self-employed. As a result of this fact, two main types of entrepreneurial education or training can be distinguished.

58. Training in entrepreneurship within the education system. Entrepreneurial knowledge and skills are contained in all of the educational contents and paths. Creativity and imagination is particularly encouraged, as well as the capacity to take initiatives and to accept responsibilities, to be capable of confronting situations of uncertainty, to be able to evaluate the risks, and to take initiatives. Such a type of training is implemented as from the level of basic education in Botswana (2.1.10), in South Africa and Angola (2.1.07), as well as in Ghana and Kenya (2.1.16). The example of Botswana is interesting to the extent that it shows how necessary it is for pupils, in order to develop an entrepreneurial attitude, to have a favourable institutional environment, that is, that the teachers, as well as those in charge of the schools, be previously trained, and that adequate teaching learning materials be developed. It also depends upon the follow-up that is needed at the end of the training period: the provision of means for counselling and orientation, the creation of support structures for the young entrepreneurs, and the granting of adequate financial means.

59. Training in entrepreneurship in the TVET mechanism. It aims at giving a basic culture to young people who are receiving technological education or are in professional apprenticeship so that they can start up their activities. It therefore includes knowledge and skills relative to the economy, to finance, to management, to the functioning of markets and to the reality of the world of work. Such a form of training has become an integral part of the restructured apprenticeship in Benin and in Mali, as well as the mechanisms for the insertion of young people used in Ethiopia or in South Africa (2.1.07). But it is not only reserved for the countries which have a strong informal economy. Norway has thus developed a strategic plan for entrepreneurship and training which concerns the entire educational path as from primary school up to university and includes the training of teachers. Encouraging creativity, active education, interdisciplinary work, cooperation between schools, local communities and enterprises as well as training in work situations are an integral part of the new forms of apprenticeship that have been set up. In Norway, training to undertake is not reduced to

simply creating an activity. It is defined more as a common educational component of the whole of the education and training system.

60. Generally, the NGO and certain donors have made available tools for training in entrepreneurship, the most well-known example of which is the GERME training, initiated and developed by the ILO. Numerous NGOs or donors are otherwise involved in the training of the young who wish to become self-employed and create their own enterprise (2.1.07). Thus a number of NGOs are involved in South Africa (Kindernothilfe, Train, Empower, Nuture and Develop...), in encouraging young people to become grouped within associations or cooperatives and, by this means, develop entrepreneurial activities (2.1.16).

61. All of these initiatives and tools are only effective if those who implement them also ensure the follow-up of such young people when they make their entrance into professional life.

An obligatory procedure: the validation and the recognition of acquired knowledge and skills

62. The diversification taking place in the mechanisms of vocational education and, particularly, the integration of informal and non-formal training as constitutive elements of these mechanisms mean that more and more countries are providing tracks and means to validate the acquired skills by on-the-spot training, in traditional apprenticeship, or through the practice of self-employment. Even though this is just a beginning, it has become absolutely necessary to relinquish the idea of the development of skills exclusively through formal training, and acknowledge, within the national framework of qualifications, the legitimacy and the effectiveness of the various paths to professionalization.

63. From the learner's point of view, the validation and the recognition of informally acquired knowledge and skills allows the learner to accede to paths and contents of training to which previously they had been denied access. From the point of view of the system as it now exists, this validation and recognition creates vertical and horizontal passageways between training and qualifications which up to then were isolated or in opposition to each other.

European legislative mechanisms of validation and certification of acquired skills outside of the formal system

64. Norway like France has put together a legislative framework and methodologies of evaluation which enable the certification of levels of qualification by the single means of the evaluation of acquired skills.

65. In 2002, France adopted a law which enabled each person to accede to all formal professional diplomas simply through the validation of knowledge acquired by experience (2.2.04).

66. Norway's example (2.5.03) in this respect is highly significant. In 2007, Norway set up a legislative framework creating an individual right to the validation of acquired knowledge and skills. More than 60,000 adults have thus been able to acquire, through the acknowledgement of their informally and non-formally acquired knowledge, along with complementary training of a reduced length, a level of qualification equivalent to that of the second cycle of secondary education. More than 10,000 adults lacking in a level of formal knowledge required for their admission into higher education have been able to accede to it after have given the proof that they had acquired such a level by following informal and non-formal paths or by informal and non-formal means.

Innovative African experiences in the validation of acquired non-formal knowledge and skills

67. Various African countries have set up mechanisms or projects which tend towards the recognition of non-formally- or informally-acquired knowledge or skills.

68. Mauritius has set up a mechanism which enables the recognition of the professional skills of the licensed workers of the sugar industry, thus giving them access to jobs in the tourism sector (2.6.02).

69. In Namibia, open and distance training establishments have the capacity to recognize acquired knowledge and skills of the informal type and thus give access through distance education to

learners so that they can undertake certified training and alternative courses in primary and secondary education (2.6. 02).

70. Ethiopia is instituting centres of skills evaluation for young people trained by following an informal or non-formal path and, as it is stated in the ongoing reform of the TVET system: “all those who have been trained in an informal manner, that is, in a working situation, through traditional apprenticeship, or who have trained themselves will have access to the evaluation of their profession and can receive certification” (2.1 .07).

71. South Africa validates the acquired skills within the framework of a learnership (training through sandwich course at the workplace), like that undertaken by young people who have been active in the informal sector. This also allows for the expansion of the social base of students in higher education by giving university access to young people and adults who have not followed the usual formal paths (2.1.07 et 2.6. 02).

Open and flexible methods of validation and certification

72. It is neither possible nor is it feasible to validate experience acquired (or prior learning) in the same way as the results of formal education. The above-mentioned example of Norway enables the listing of various possible approaches.

73. The validation of what has been acquired through dialogue. The evaluator questions the person to be evaluated so that the tacit knowledge and skills can be identified that the person has difficulty in formulating and thus brings to light what has been really acquired and is lacking within the framework of the certification of the curriculum. Such an approach is particularly adapted to adults who have difficulty in reading, writing and arithmetic.

74. The validation of the range of skills or portfolio. The latter includes various tests and types of elements that can be made available. The modules and contents are approved on the basis of the documentation provided and, after the evaluation, complementary training courses are proposed, in order to allow the candidates to obtain the required certification.

75. Placing the person in a professional situation: the evaluator questions the candidate on his/her education and professional background and various other capacities, then allows the person to demonstrate what he/she knows how to do. This approach compensates for the absence of proof and is particularly suitable to persons of other ethnic origins who have difficulty in expressing themselves in the language of the country.

76. These various approaches can be found in similar forms in the innovative experiences of validation of acquired knowledge and skills implemented on the African continent.

Towards the generalization of national frameworks of qualifications

77. The diversity of the paths of training and professional insertion identified in the various countries and their sometimes formal, non-formal or informal character increasingly motivate African countries to implement, just as has been done in Europe and the rest of the world, national frameworks of qualifications which improve upon the past ways not only of the fragmentation of responsibilities but also in the supply of training.

78. Since 1997, South Africa has set up such a national framework. It reinforces the access of various populations to education and training, establishes passageways between these paths and, because of this, helps to fight against the social inequalities inherited from apartheid (2.6.02).

79. Ethiopia is implementing a reform of vocational education and training which includes both the definition of reference systems for normalized trades at the national level and the possibility of access to acknowledged national qualifications whatever might have been the formal or informal modalities of the acquisition of knowledge or skills thus validated (2.1.07).

80. Benin in the same way as Mali and Senegal are setting up systems of trade references which give access to the same level of certification and thus to the qualification of youth and adults who have followed the paths of formal training or professionalization by having been employed in real working situations (2.1.07).

81. Mauritius has, in the same way, finalized and improved its national system of qualifications by improving the quantity and the relevance of professionalization and certification mechanisms, whilst Zimbabwe has structured its TVET system according to five levels of identical qualifications for the entire country (2.6.02).

82. In a global manner, the various experiences in validation of knowledge and skills acquired outside of the formal system and their registration within a single national framework of qualifications opens up the way to the recognition by the certifying authorities to various alternative paths towards professionalization. They are thus obligatory passageways towards the implementation of post-primary vocational education, enabling populations excluded from the formal systems to accede to the same levels and types of qualifications as those accessible by means of formal education. The implementation of these national frameworks however find themselves confronted with the fact that many countries have not yet established an equivalence between the levels of education and training attained and certified and the classification of those jobs are that occupied, even when this classification exists. Most of the time, the only existing classification is that of public employment and the existing correspondence between these jobs and the diplomas obtained is purely formal.

1.9 Predictable conclusions

83. The African continent is today confronted with a primary challenge which is that of getting out of the poverty trap and, in order to do that, to change its economy, in a phase of increasing informalization, from a subsistence economy to that of an economy of growth and development. But this is only possible by increasing the skills acquired by all and particularly by youth. The studies undertaken for the Biennale show that this increase cannot be gained only through formal education and training, but rather calls for the recognition and validation of a diversity of mechanisms and, particularly, the recognition of the professionalization and qualifications provided by the public authorities in partnership with economic, social or territorial actors, who are to be found positioned in close proximity to the sectoral or territorial economic development needs.

84. The African continent must take up a second challenge that is to give each young person, of a good or feeble educational level, girl or boy, rural or urban, of whatever social level he/she might be, the opportunity to accede, by taking diverse paths, to the same right to education, to qualifications, and to professional insertion.

85. Beyond the post-primary vocational education stake lies the equitable right of all young Africans to a level of professionalization and income which enables them to actively participate in the creation of a sustainable future for the African continent. Further on, there is also a stake to be confronted which concerns Africa's future position now that it has entered, just like all other continents, into the era of knowledge and skills societies, and into worldwide economic, social and cultural development.

86. In a general manner, the analysis of the situation of vocational education in the various countries calls for a certain number of paths towards work to be taken, and/or recommendations to be followed, which can be resumed as follows :

- 1) **Post-primary vocational education and training has as its primary mission the professional insertion of youth.** It must allow numerous young Africans, who have dropped out of the education system or who cannot accede to higher education, to acquire the professional skills required for their insertion into the labour market. It must, in order to do this, integrate into its obligations the accompaniment of young people up to their entry into an active working life.
- 2) **Post-primary vocational education has a challenge which is that of allowing young people not only to acquire a profession but also to develop capacities of initiative and creativity, as well as a desire to become an entrepreneur.** In most countries, the professional insertion of youth is mainly undertaken through the informal economy. The existing post-primary mechanisms, or those to be implemented, must take into account this reality and help young people to acquire the skills which will allow them either to accede to an existing activity, or to create their own activity and, in all cases, to gain a decent standard of living.
- 3) **The various formal, non-formal or informal mechanisms of professionalization need to be present in a post-primary integrated system of vocational education and training.** The existing formal mechanisms are targeted at a minority of pupils. It is necessary for countries to take into account all the various non-formal and informal paths towards apprenticeship and professionalization where the majority of young people can be found. These paths have been implemented by professional organizations as well as non-governmental organizations and various public and private institutions which are active in urban and rural areas. They indicate the high level of involvement of civil society in the development of skills for youth.
- 4) **A post-primary system of vocational education is not truly integrated and effective unless it is piloted through partnership.** The setting up of such an integrated system cannot succeed without the active participation of all the professional, economic and social partners concerned. These partners have already a mission and a task, in a number of countries, to define the need for skills required for economic and social development and to train the young people whom they have in their care. They must increasingly become the unavoidable partners of public authorities, in order to continuously adapt the mechanisms and the existing paths towards training to the constant evolution of the labour market.
- 5) **The development of skills should benefit all categories of young people.** The analysis of the present situation shows that numerous young people have been left aside in the

development of skills: the pupils who do not finish the primary cycle; the out-of-school youth not yet old enough to work; the populations that are particularly marginalized in the rural areas; the young girls who are most under-represented in the formal and informal paths to professionalization; the under-educated ex-combatants, because of their early enrolment, who are often handicapped... The reforms to be implemented must take into account the specific needs for training and qualification of these various categories of young people.

- 6) Skills development can only be successful if flexible and diversified paths are taken to achieve it.** The field surveys show that, in various countries, diverse paths of professionalization have begun to be created for those excluded from education for all, in order to give them a second chance in literacy and in training, and for traditional apprentices, so that they can accede to theoretical as well as practical skills or, again, for the youth of the rural areas, so that they can become actors in local development. All these attempts show that post-primary vocational education cannot be contained in a uniform system but rather that the multiple mechanisms must be brought together so that they can be adapted to specific populations and situations.
- 7) The various paths towards professionalization must lead to recognized and certified qualifications.** An integrated system of post-primary vocational education and training will only be effective if the various paths toward formal, non-formal and informal training end in an acknowledgement of their national value as acquired knowledge and skills. This requires that the various countries implement modes of recognition and certification of acquired experience and skills gained in a working situation, as well as by the results attained during the training periods that have been implemented. This also requires the progressive setting up of national frameworks of qualifications, which give coherence and value to the levels of professionalization thus attained, and that relate to a labour market which is in a constant state of evolution.
- 8) The setting up of an integrated system of post-primary vocational education requires appropriate means and modes of financing.** Vocational education receives diminished funds from the public education budgets. Furthermore, those budgetary sums which are given over to it go exclusively to the formal mechanisms of TVET. The implementation of a real policy for the training and professional insertion of young Africans demands that a significant overhaul of the State's present budgetary policies be undertaken, which, at the same time, require modes of co-financing which involve, as is already the case in a number of countries, the various national actors as well as the international technical and financial partners.
- 9) The policies of professionalization to be implemented must allow Africa to stand up to the challenges of globalization.** The continent must fight against poverty by using all means available to go from a subsistence or informal economy to an economy of growth and development. It must, at the same time, confront an increasingly competitive technological development and globalization of exchange. Africa will only be able to surmount this double challenge by investing the maximum in the qualifications of its young people who represent more than 60% of its population. It means enabling young people to acquire little by little the capital of knowledge and skills that they need to become full members of today's globalized world as its economic, social and civilian actors.

10) All the existing paths towards professionalization or those to be created are, in fact, needed in order to attain the objectives of education for all. It is time to put an end to the view of vocational education that it is just a simple adaptation to the technical or procedural know-how of the labour market. The various paths towards professionalization that have been implemented, or are being designed in the various countries, all point towards the effective role that vocational education plays in helping young people to acquire, complete and reinforce the platform upon which to build basic knowledge, which represents one of the millennium development goals. The design and completion by the various countries of integrated post-primary vocational education is an essential step towards guaranteeing all African youth simultaneous access to a basic level of education and a minimum level of professional qualifications. This double access, furthermore, is the best way for these young people to be able to envisage a personal and professional future which is counterpoint to that of the exclusion and hopelessness that it experiences today.